Isekai meikyuu de dorei harem wo

Chapter 1 - Prologue

Suicide Website.

Informed persons of course know about it. It is a site where suicide methods are recorded and where you can find company to suicide together.

I was among the users of this site.

It's not because I wanted to kill myself.

However, I was tempted by death.

In this world I was in simple despair.

I received a simple bullying.

It was not straightforward . It was the malicious type of ignoring.

In class, at lunchtime, on my way home too, I was alone.

Because they already used violence directly during my primary school days , this was better?

I'm learning kendo and aikido now. I didn't like being bullied so I started during primary school.

I became considerably strong , therefore recently the guys who used violence are gone.

These guys are miserable.

Even if weaklings compensate with violence, because they can’t win they can only ignore me.

Well, I too despised them so there is no way that we can get along.

Their attitude is similar to how my father acts at home.

He used to get violent with me when my mother died, but now he's frightened that i might retaliate and doesn't talk with me anymore.

After all, that's how the world works.

It doesn't matter how much you fix your attitude/reputation, in the end power means everything in the world.

If they are no match for your strenght, they won't face you directly.

Having said that, even if you have power you can’t take the top of the current world.

I believe that the world is rotten.

This is the reason why I was thinking of such a thing.

And I then got sucked in by the website that I found by accident.

If I think about it, I don’t have any attachment to this world.

I don’t have a family that I can rely on, a lover, or even friends.

apart from that I don't have any other regrets.

My grades aren't particularly good.

Because of the abuse that I received from my father, entering university is impossible.

And I’m poor.

By the way, the priest of a buddhist temple is teaching to the children aikido and kendo free of charge.

However, I knew it.

The priest wanted to touch all over the girls to his taste.

It's those kind of things that shows how the world is rotten.

If I have one regret, it would be "that".

Honesty, I wanted to graduate of my virginity.

It is sad to die without ever having had this experience.

It's this kind of things a highschool boy thinks about.

Also, after all dying is scary.

I dislike painful and scary things.

If a person is determined to die they can do anything.

I was considerably devoted in kendo and aikido.

I suppose that I have a considerable power.

I think I’d be lying if I said that I have the feeling that the situation would improve one way or another.

When I could not have the determination and firmness to kill myself, a link popped up in front of my eyes :

「Before you decide to commit suicide」.

So. This, this is.

For the healthy young me, the still a second-year student of high school, a recommendation about not ending my life.

I wanted something like this.

Still I'm scared to die.

For the time being I clicked the advertisement.

……What is this?

I who moved to that page, murmur instinctively.

To put it in a fast way, The recommendation is that if it's difficult to live in this world, then go to another world.

Seriously?

An appropriate world for you to live in, thus, you can select the one you'd like.

A world where science and technology develops, a world where pirates dominate, a world with sword and magic.....

So there is a world with magic?

When I choose it, a world where only human lives, a world where humans, elf and dwarf lives, a world where are humans, demihumans and human

beast, etc, those choices rolled down successively,

I understood.

This is an entrance to a net game.

An advertisement link probably.

I don't understand the proposition of an advertisement for candidates to suicide, but I won't think deeper about it, and continue.

It's possible that a net games would help now.

Instead of thinking about a suicide, it is more saludable.

Unexpectedly, maybe because there are many that think that way, they made this advertisement.

I only played a few net games since high school.

But since I had no friends it was only solo play.

So that's why. I didn't fit, and some time later I stopped playing games.

Still, I enjoyed it.

I didn't hate it.

When I continue moving forward, they make me choose from several cultures and countries.

Why is nothing interresting is happening?

When I was getting tired, there were other countries in my path. // no idea what that meant //

The next choice was the frequency of war.

A world where countries fight each other aggressively, or a peaceful world.

In the case of a online game, when you joined a guild you could participate in guild wars.

It's unrelated to a solo player like me.

The four worlds that inclines toward peace is chosen.

After that, dungeon type or field type.

It's difficult to choose either.

I choose both.

It's mysterious about why I have to choose and a man in uniform don't came, the last, I think that a recommendation is going to appear. // again

no idea what he meant there , a reference to something ? man in black ? //

Really, there is a lot to choose.

They made me choose even the language used.

It seems there is no japanese.

What is brahim?

I put in default because I don't understand well.

When I became bored with so many entries, a bonus points page appears.

Oh.

Like a game.

I clicked several times again, the numerical value is changed.

I’m the absorbed type with things like these.

Until a nice number appears I’m going to continue.

I love aikido, It's possible that I was absorbed with that too.

The same action is repeated many times. In a way it was fun.

Only a low number of bonus points come out.

There are many 10s to 20s. One digits too.

What shall be the highest number?

Oops, 62.

Is it high? Maybe it can go higher, a difficult number.

I started repeatedly clicking again.

There was 40 at times and once in awhile 50.

I have to aim for a higher number than before.

71.

The numerical value has turned green.

does it mean that this is passable?

But in one column appear 1.

If the last was 5 it would be sufficient, and I want to aim for a number a bit higher, if it is possible over 79.

I chose to do it again.

However, 70 doesn't appear, only appear 60.

I failed?

While thinking so, I clicked.

I have to give up in the 60s?

While I thinking that in the moment that I clicked by inertia, the number of 8 passed in front of me.

It was 80 now?

80 right?

The numerical value on the page, it stopped by the number 19.

Guaa. Damn it!

I'll leave it to my power and I do it again.

Haa. It can’t be helped.

I’m going to turn back and click again.

Though I saw 60 several times, when you see 80 once, you already can't stop at 60 anymore.

How much time has passed?

After that, 70 didn’t come out.

I keep clicking reluctantly.

Although I was tired of waiting for a high number, I continued.

To prevent what I did a little ago, after I clicked I confirmed the number. Only after confirming I’ll click again.。

Re-doing. Confirmation. Re-doing. Confirmation. Re-doing.

In first place, why I’m doing these kinds of things?

On the contrary, why are the one digit bonus points no good ?

Although I think that, I continue clicking.

If this is going to be like this, then it is obstinacy.

Click again, the numerical value is confirmed, then click again.

Forever, I continued to click.

Click. Click. Click.

Click. Click. Click.

99。

That number shines like it was gold.

Finally, finally it came out.

For this number to come out, how much time did it take?

With great difficult this number came out.

Perhaps there aren’t 3 digits numbers, maybe this is the top.

99.

When I see that number, I’m flooded with satisfaction.

After fighting for a long time ,I finally reached the end.

Like my memories are being frantically squeezed out.

Every day of hardship, endurance, and despair, It can't recall them now.

After the whole struggle I put up.

I don’t care about the game.

While I was tasting the satisfaction, I continued to select the settings.

Following the setting of the bonus-point was the character setting.

There aren’t any explanation about charging.

It will be a game played in a browser?

After I got high bonus points. I feel awkward to stop now.

I have no choice but to continue.

In the setting of the character, there was physical strength, increase stamina, there was every kind of setting about parameters, settings for

bonus equipment, magic and skills, I reached the point when I have to utilize the bonus points.

When I tried to experiment about rising the physical strenght to 99, the bonus points became 0.

There is no change in the rest.

In this kind of game, when you raise your parameters you gain benefits, but there are many where your raise your lvl and your strenght don’t

change.

I should put points in another thing?

How about bonus equipment.

I'll be able to obtain not less than the strongest equipment in the game?

But I think that only the start of the game will be easy.

It seems that I can use magic.

Warp maybe, gamma-ray burst maybe.

However, what should I choose?

I was thinking that this was some sort of site of strategy, but if I think about it I don't know the name of this game.

Despite that, I'm trying this game.

Because bonus-point 99 went out, I don't like doing it again another time.

If this was some game of tactic where you have to donate to obtain 99, I will have waited splendidly.

What should I do?

that's what I was thinking, until I found at the bottom of the page the button of character reset.

If you have bonus points you can redo again?

Because this was the character setting page, I think it's normal that you can redo your character again.

If that is the case, I can stop worrying about it and think about an appropriate setting.

I clicked in the reset of the character, and the check is put.

Seems that I be able to use the bonus points.

A decrease of necessary experience.

Of course, it is necessary.

But, there is another skills next to it with increased experience too.

how are they different?

For now I'm going to choose both.

When I put the check in decrease of necessary experience, the bonus-point becomes 97, the decrease of necessary experience changed to a half.

(TL: If you don't understand, for example if he needed to kill one monster for one lvl, now with that monster he can lvl up two levels)

Reinforced version of a decrease of necessary experience, perhaps I should say, the evolved form.

When I clicked the decrease of necessary experience the bonus points become 95, necessary experience change to 1/2 into 1/3.

When I clicked It changed to 1/3 and becomes 1/5 and the bonus points 91.

When I clicked It changed to 1/5 and becomes 1/10 and the bonus points 83.

The bonus-point has decreased in one breath.

Apparently, the necessary bonus points to evolve the skill doubles each time : 1, 2, 4, 8.

When I try to click again the necessary experience of 1/10, the bonus points become 67, and it changed to 1/20.

As supposed the double.

83-67=16。

When the check on the 1/20 of necessary experience is removed, it become 1/10 again and 83 bonus points.

I click again, bonus points 91, I return to necessary experience 1/5.

I suppose that now I going to obtain the 1/3.

Now I choose the increased experience.

When I put the check, the bonus point become 90, and the increased experience become the double.

The same pattern?

When I clicked the increased experience the bonus points become 88, increased experience changed to double into triple.

When I clicked the increased experience the bonus points become 84, increased experience changed to triple into quintuple.

I leave it here?

And the others.

Second job.

I can use this. Without a doubt.

Usually, the job system in the games, they permit using peculiar skills and magics. If you have a second job, you can use peculiar skills and

magics from it.

The bonus points are mysterious.

If you don't have bonus points and you don't set the skills what happen to the player?

When I put check in second job, the bonus points become 83, and it chaged to a third job.

Again the same pattern?

In the start there aren't many jobs that you can use.

If the third job is necessary I would reset again.

There is settings for the skill of the job at the side.

They are different?

If I don't set the job, they are going to put at their convenience?

I'm going to come again too if I have to reset.

Increase MP recovery and abbreviation of chanting too, they are skills that I can use? I don't know if I'm going to be able to use magic in the

start, I'll leave to the reset.

Discount negotiation. Purchase negotiation.

I can reset it if I have to buy something later.

Appraisal.

This has to be useful in this kind of game of strategy.

What do I do?

I'll leave it for later.

I'm going to ignore the bonus chanting for the time being.

There is Lv99 death, release all MP, it's safe? and there are good spells.

But I'm not going to use the realease of all HP.

If I say that I'm not going to use, I'm not going.

I return to bonus equipment.

If thinking only about the start , the bonus equipment is absolutely necessary.

I put check in arms.

The bonus-point becomes 82, arms changed into arms 2.

The same pattern in the bonus equipment?

When I keep clicking to arms 6, the bonus-point becomes 20, after 6, it become a blurred character.

It’s okay so far.

Now, I click two times in accessory, bonus point become 17.

Then, I click the check in necessary experience (bonus points 9), next I clicked in increased experience to 1/5.

The remaining bonus point is 1.

Appraisal? chanting bonus? or the next is bonus equip?

Appraisal.

I clicked this at the end.

With that the bonus point becomes 0.

The decision is selected, the character setting has ended.

The screen has changed.

Warning!

You selected "throw away this world and live in another world".

It is not possible to come back to this world.

Do you continue?

Yes　No

What is it? This isn't the billing of the account.

If this is not the billing I don’t care then.

I clicked yes suitably.

Final warning.

It’s really not possible to go back.

Still, do you want to continue?

Yes No

how persistent. I clicked Yes.

Eh?

I think really that was a dangerous message… maybe… is……..

Without stopping to think calmly, my consciousness disapeared as if it was sucked away.

Chapter 2 - Stable

When I came to I was sleeping on straw.

Why on straw?

But it’s no error, its straw.

I was sleeping on stacked straw , in what looked like a shed

can you find straw in tokyo ?

No, rather why am I here?

Think about it.

Did I do anything yesterday?

Certainly I was trying to play a strange online game.

Then my consciousness became fuzzy

When I noticed, I was on straw.

Did something happened? I'm not sure.

So this is the game?

It’s a complete virtual reality.

It’s impossible.

I never heard that kind of story.

moreover, I entered the game by clicking ?

It's impossible.

Then It’s a dream?

[Bururu]

At this moment , the sound of something neighing was heard.

Uoo. I was surprised.

There is something in the shed.

I looked closely.

A horse.

Eh?

What?

The information of the horse, suddenly comes to my mind.

It seems to be correct that there is a horse.

When I approached it , I noticed it was quite large .

The thickness the limbs , like a thoroughbred, means it's a horse probably.

I don’t know the kind of horse. // that's some deep horse knowledge.
Remember kids , if you want to check if it's a horse , look at it's limbs //

The shed was about as big as an apartement

There's only one animal , he has a good social standing

I wanted it to apologize to me and my father for the 4 to 4.5 tatamis we live in.

It can’t be helped if I get angry for that, so start looking around.

Faint red light comes from the window making the shed gloomy

is it sunset or dawn ?

There's no sign of anyone being around

the window can't be opened aparently

The horse was quiet.

What shall be? While I think that, of course, horse, his information comes to my mind.

What is that?, when I think about it , it occures to me.

Appraisal.

I recalled that.

Yesterday, in the character setting, I added that skill last.

I look at myself, and appraisal activates.

Michio Kaga Man 17 years

Villager Lv1

Oooh.

Information popped up in my mind.

Michio Kaga is my name.

Then, there's no doubt I'm inside a game.

It’s a full virtual reality?

But how?

First, I didn’t register my name.

I have the same appearance and the same jersey as yesterday.

I'm wearing my usual clothes.

Are they reproduced in the game?

Despite the equipment, the jersey?

Moreover, I’m bare foot.

The temperature niether hot nor cold.

I’m not embarrassed with this appearance, but it's troubling going out barefoot.

The light coming from the window has become slightly brighter. Is it the morning glow then ? I look in the shed and find some sandals then put them on.

When I wonder about them, information comes to my mind.

Sandals boots equipment of foot

I decided to wear them.

Because I’m without socks, I wear them barefoot.

I tied the strings in a way they couldn't come off.

When I was thinking about checking my body, information comes to my mind.

Michio Kaga Man 17 years

Villager Lv1 Thief Lv1

Equipment sandals boots

……Errr.

Thief Lv1 means that ,right?

My fault. I equipped equipment that is not mine.

In what way I got the second job.

By the way, the jersey isn't counted as equipment.

Because I brought it outside of the game?

Incidentally, there should be bonus equipment.

When I search the room, there was a sword next to the straw.

Durandal Both hands sword

Skills Five time offensive power HP absorption MP absorption
 Interruption of chanting ignore level gap modifiers ignore defense

As one would expect of the bonus of the arms.

It appears that I have sublime strenght hidden. // how is it yours, and how is it hidden ? … //

Next to the sword, there is a ring, too.

Ring of determination Accessory

Skills Increase of offensive power Personal strengthening

The accessory has 2 skills its moderate?

I wear the ring on a finger, and take the sword.

Michio Kaga Man 17 years

Villager Lv1 Thief Lv1

Equipment Durandal Sandal boots Ring of determination

As expected this is the inside of the game.

I can determine that was the setting of the character and even the bonus equipment that I had chosen.

Thought I don’t know how they implemented the virtual reality.

I decided to go out of the stable.

I wore durandal in my jersey belt string , like a samurai

It will be bad if I stay here for too long and they notice the sandals are missing

The scenery outside was a like any rural village.

There was severals houses made of wood, in the surroundings there are vegetable gardens.

The fields extends to the east with the sun. near in the north there is a forest.

Despite that the sun has not come out yet, the villagers already started with their activities.

There was two persons walking on the road.

In a hurry I hide behind the stable.

Through I don’t understand why it's necessary for me to hide.

But I don’t understand where I am.

I better act carefully.

I did steal the sandals after all.

From my cover I saw the two persons.

Zaiyan Man 38 years

Villager Lv8

Ganakku Man 35 years

Villager Lv8

That was their information.

First, they don't have names.

They might not be players.

Their lvls aren't that high, maybe they are configured like this.

Although, I’m Lv1.

I entered the forest from the other side of the stable, I’m going to inspect the forest.

Maybe there won't be any problem if I let them notice me , but I continue anyway

The village extends splendidly to the southwest.

There are three privates house, and fourty houses.

In the center there is a two story house, and a three story house too.

I’m observing the persons that goes out of the house.

Villager Lv11

Villager Lv4

Farmer Lv5

Oh, that person is not a villager.

The person beside looks like a wife, she is a villager Lv6.

I don’t know if there is a difference between farmer and villager.

The game looks good, though the tutorial didn't come out.

Without appraisal, I would not know anything.

I keep observing.

Farmer Lv2

Villager Lv7

Villager Lv25

This middle-age man has the highest lvl.

If I talk to somebody, It has to be the highest lvl?

Or should it be the lowest lvl?

Village chief Lv8

The village chief has a suspiciously low lvl. It appear that he's 68 years old.

Merchant Lv6

Is it a peddler? Is there a shop somewhere in the village?

It seems that they had left the three-story house, now they are entering. // what … ? //

Merchant Lv3

This time is a woman.

It seems that they left that house to go to a water well.

If they're a couple, then is that house their shop?

That merchant seems like a good candidate to talk to

When I was thinking, a big voice suddenly resounded in the village.

Chapter 3 - Thief

A big roar echoed throughout the entire village.

I looked in the direction of the voices.

The two-man party who was outside the village looked like they were rushing back

It seems that they are shouting but I don’t understand what they are saying.

A bit later , the villagers started coming out of their houses with weapons

They carry swords and hoes.

It can’t be. Was I discovered?

That's what I was thought , but it didn't look like they were aiming for me

The villagers gathered and went to the east in a hurry.

I followed them quietly through the forest.

Looking to the east , I notice a cloud of sand coming this way.

All the villagers are advancing in this direction

Thief Lv7

Equipment : copper sword – leather shoes

Thief Lv11

Equipment : copper sword – leather armor – leather shoes

Thief Lv4

Equipment : copper sword

Though the thieves are far enough to seem like grains of rice, the necessary information has popped up in my mind.

With the help of appraisal , the current situation became clear

Is the thieves' raid a start-of-game event?

If I stay hidden in the forest maybe I can do something.

The general levels of the thieves are high.

I could deal with them if they only had one-digit levels

because i carry the sacred sword Durandal

The villagers can't rival me with their copper swords

The villagers have taken position around the barn I was sleeping in on the border of the village.

They will fight the thieves in that place it seems

The lvl25 middle-aged man of before is at the center.

The village chief was there too.

His lvl was an impossible Lv8.

The thieves whom they are to confront….

Thief Lv41

Equipment : iron sword - Thief's bandana – iron armor – leather shoes

It seems that man is the leader.

His level is high.

He was equipped with a thief's bandana.

The second strongest was only lvl 19

The third is the Lv11 of before.

The rest are in one digits.

Is it because it's the first event that their levels are low?

If I'm cautious with their leader, even I can defeat him somehow.

When the thieves arrived to the village, they started to attack the villagers.

The villagers responded to that with an attack of their own.

Soon , both sides starts jumbling together to the point i can't tell who is in which camp

I don't understand anything they are saying and shouting

The place where they are fighting is right in front of where I'm hiding.

If I get out from the forest I can take them by surprise.

Because both sides are in low levels, none is overpowered, the development is that they are fighting equally sword to sword.

The middle-age man of Lv25 is fighting the leader of Lv41.

But, there is a level gap , eventually the leader starts dominating.

The leader threw down the middle-aged man. The middle-age man is on the ground and is trying to move his arm but is stabbed instead.

What is he doing?

It seems like he got stabbed from an opening in his armor by the thieve's sword

I heard it that in the ancient martial arts they wore armors to fight.

The middle-aged man is postrated, naturally the leader turn towards him.

Perhaps, now is my chance?

If it’s now, I have the feeling that I can reach the leader without being noticed.

With my sacred sword Durandal ,only one hit from behind should be enough to deal considerable damage to him.

My heart is throbbing.

I pulled out Durandal who was shining from the scabbard hanging on my waist, I grabbed it's hilt tightly with both of my hands. (// YOU PERVERTS !!)

Durandal was heavier than a wooden sword, but not to the extent that I can't wield it.

For me who practiced kendo this is a easy victory.

If this is the initial event of the game , then they shouldn't be enemies i have no chance of defeating as a lvl1.

Then there is no choice but to go.

I take a big breath again.

I concentrate on the surrounding's sounds

Yet, I don’t understand anything that they are saying.

I rush out from the forest.

I aim at the leader Lv41, running at him at full speed

On the way, one thief noticed me and tried to stop me.

I swung Durandal downward and with a single stroke I slayed the thief Lv2.

Is this really a lvl2 ?

I raised Durandal again, and continued to run. Jumping a little at the end, I landed next to the leader.

Without error I focused my energy to kill him, I convey that energy to my arms. I stand firmly, and swung durandal downwards.

I drop the sword to the neck of the leader. Durandal has captured the neck of the thief.

The head is sent flying.

Red blood is spurting out from what is left of the neck.

Uwaa.

What kind of splatter isthis ?

The decision is that this is a shit game.

But I don't have the time to think.

I started to challenge the other thieves.

Surrounding the leader were thieves of single digit levels, with one stroke everything was settled.

Every time I swing Durandal, more blood is sprayed, the enemy is reduced to a few people.

I searched for the second strongest, the Lv19 thief.

While I finish the small fry with single digits levels, swinging to the left and right on their necks, I checked the thieves.

The thief Lv19, that was a little separated from their leader was attacking the village chief.

There is some villagers gathering around the chief, they are strengthening their defense.

Someone is shouting something.

The thief Lv19 is looking here, as expected he was shouting something.

They stopped fighting and began to run away.

Because their leader was defeated, they started to withdraw.

Because they are showing their back, now is my chance.

I started to pursue them.

I slaughtered some of the thieves from behind.

In front of me, the Lv11 was in my way. It’s the third man.

I stopped the sword that came from the left , this time I swung the sword from the left, he caught my sword.

Because he has armor, I probably can't defeat him in one blow.

With a fast judgement and a small movement of the sword, I hit his forearm.

If this was kendo , this movement I'd do for sure.

The right wrist of the thief Lv11 is completely cut off and falls to the ground.

I ignore the blood that is coming from his wrist and return to finish him. Because he doesn’t have a wrist he can’t lift his sword.

The head of the thief Lv11 is sent flying.

I ran from the splash of blood.

The thieves enter completely in retreat mode.

The thief Lv19 is the first to escape. A miserable guy. Or should I say ,he is a thief in the end.

I slaughtered even more thieves who were trying to run away. And then, the thief Lv19 got cut off.

The thief Lv19 that is showing me his defenseless back is no match for Durandal.

The remain enemies are scattering.

In the end, none of the thieves could escape, they became my experience.

「Fuu」

After I defeated every thief, I seated down in that spot.

Even though this is a game, my breath is rough.

I let a big breath out. It recovered one's composure.

The sounds of my surroundings suddenly returned to me.

In the field, the corpse of the thieves and their sprayed out blood were everywhere.

It’s not necessary to do it so real.

It seems that for the bodies to disappear it takes time.

The beta tester didn’t complain?

Because I didn’t hear of a virtual reality game, maybe what I’m doing now is the beta test.

Then, I'm gonna make the complaint.

When I had regained my breath, the village chief approached me.

The village chief with his doubtful low lvl 8.

「××××××××××」

「I don’t understand what you are saying」

「Excuse me. So you talk Brahim ?」

(TL: Everybody sounds execivly polite when talking to him but i have no idea how to make it sound the same)

「××××××××××」

There was that. That setting.

「That’s right」

「Oh. As expected. That’s an adventurer for you」

What is “as expected”? You talk it too.

「Something like that」

I suitably nodded.

「You have saved the village from it's predicament, thank you very much」

「No, it’s nothing」

It is such an event.

But, I'm unusually impertinent.

Must be because the village chief deprecates himself and doesn't stop praising me.

Although his level is low, tentatively he is the village chief.

It’s troublesome that he's being so polite , somehow, it’s become like this.

「Allow me to give you my thanks in any way I can」

「Is that so? Then, is there a place where I can lie down? I’m a bit tired」

Even though this is a game, it practically feels like I moved my body so I’m tired.

As one would expect of virtual reality.

Besides, I don’t want to stay any longer where the corpses of the thieves are. Disappear fast.

「Then, please come to my house. I’m called Somara the village chief」

Somara Man 68 Years

Village chief Lv8

Equipment : Sword of copper - Robe - Sandals boots - Village chief's ring

It seems that the information was not an error.

「Please. My name is Michio」

It seems that they don’t have a surname, I guess that only Michio is good.

The village chief started to walk away, so i stood up in a hurry to chase after him.

「××××××××××」

「××××××××××」

The conversation between the village chief and the villager, I didn't understand anything at all.

What is happening with this game.

「Persons that can speak brahim are few?」

「In this village, only me, the merchant Bikka and the mistress of the inn」

「Fuun. That kind of things?」

「Michio-sama despite being so young, as one would expected you can handle

the brahim」

「Hmm」

What is amazing?

By the way, brahim is not japanese? It's not japanese then it’s weird.

Though It wouldn’t be possible for me to talk, for some reason I can comprehend everything perfectly.

I don’t understand virtual reality at all.

「Although there was another man who can talk brahim, another adventurer, in the the battle just now, he……」

The village chief lowered his voice.

Seem that was the lvl 25 middle-aged man. Or there is another with the former job of adventurer with exception of the villager. But I didn't see another capable person.

What is happening?

I see myself.

Michio Kaga Man 17 Years

Villager Lv2 Thief Lv2

Equipment : Durandal - Sandals boots - Ring of determination

Ooops.

It seems that my lvl has gone up with the last battle.

I should say that is natural because of the fierce fighting? I should grieve that despite the fierce battle I only lvl up one level?

We faced towards the village chief house.

「××××××××××」

「××××××××××」

「a hot bath is being prepared for you」

「Sorry」

The village chief is talking to one person of the house, I was leaded into the house.

The house of the chief was one of the private house and two-storied building. An appearance of rusticity made with an earth wall.

It seem that they don't have a high level of civilization. They are like in the first term of the ancient times of the middle age.

They don't have a gun or a bow.

There is a dirt floor from the entranceway until the entrance.

I was guided to a small room just beside that.

「Please, take a rest for a while in this room」

「Allow me to do that」

「Then」

The room is with no difference, it's with dirt floor, in the interior there is a plank of wood.

I lie on the plank.

「Fuu」

I let out a sigh.

For the time being, I log out?

……

Eh?

How do I log out?

Chapter 4 - Grasp of the situation

I can’t log out.

I panicked.

If I think about it, I don’t know how to log out.

I didn’t receive an explanation or a tutorial.

How do I return to reality?

「Logout.....」

I was murmuring that, but nothing happened.

「Logoff. Close. Interruption. End. Menu. Open. Save」

Nothing happen.

「Menu open. Main menu. End menu. Options menu. End options. Window. Window open. Menu window. End window. Memory. Save. End save. Overwrite save. Reset. Clear. Comeback. Return. End. Over. Finished.....」

I tried everything I can think of but nothing happened.

I can’t return to reality.

No, rather, is this really a game?

My senses are telling me this place is real.

Without a doubt.

It is impossible that this is a dream.

Even if this was really inside a game and a virtual reality, I have never heard of such a perfect virtual reality.

Yet, through only a click with the mouse in the browser.

Headgear or something like that, I don't have such equipment.

And I have a sense of reality yet this is not a virtual reality world.

If I have to say it in one way or another, this is reality.

But, there is a reason why I think this is a game.

I use appraisal and look at myself.

Michio Kaga Man 17 Years

Villager Lv2 Thief Lv2

Equipment : Sandals boots - Ring of determination

Because that kind of thing is possible, this must be inside a game, right?

However, after seeing my appearance, I have confirmed.

The blood stained in my jersey.

If this was a game, things like blood disappear.

So if this was a game, why didn't the blood disappear no matter how much time has passed?

Is this place really inside a game?

No, if this is a game, why can't I log out?

Can I return to reality?

Warning!

You have selected to thrown away this world to live in another world.

It is not possible to come back to this world.

Do you continue?

The last memory at my house.

At the end of the setting, I'm sure that question appeared.

That may be true.

Certainly, I can use appraisal and I have what seems to be the level 6 weapon armament, Durandal, as well.

Just because this may be inside a game, I can't be relieved.

If this is the setting of the world that I choose, that warning that appeared may be real.

「Excuse me」

When I was thinking about such things, the village chief has entered.

He entered with a tub made of wood, filled with hot water.

「Ah, yes」

「Please, wipe your body with this hot water」

There was what appears to be a maid, an old lady and she leave the tub and a plain towel.

It's only a piece of cloth rather than a towel.

「Sorry」

「A change of clothing was prepared. Because your clothes got dirty, we have to wash them」

「Please do」

The old lady fold up the clothes and put them on the plank.

From her age of 66 years and the impression that I received, I think that she's the village chief's wife.

After finishing, she went out with the village chief.

I, who was alone, take off the jersey and wipe my body with the towel.

The jersey has red stains in several places.

Thieves' blood.

There is no sign that it's going to disappear, no matter how much time passed.

If this is not inside a game, of course it's not going to disappear.

As expected, this is not inside a game.

I let out a great breath

Indeed, I can use appraisal, and I have the level 6 weapon armament.

Nevertheless, who decided that this was the inside of a game?

Final warning.

It's really not possible to go back.

Including the last warning, this is a world where the settings I chose are valid.

In other words, this is reality.

The warning was for this other world.

Yes.

I have to accept this.

I noticed. I was only escaping from reality.

From what reality was I escaping from?

Homicide.

If this was within a game, I only defeated a character in the game.

But if this is not a game, I didn't kill a character but a person.

That's why, I wanted to think that this is a game.

It is only an escape from reality, a wish.

Just an illusion.

I must accept this.

This is my reality.

I've committed murder.

I killed a person.

Killing while thinking it is just a game event, but the sensation of Durandal still remains in my hand.

I took the life of another person.

But if I think about it.

This is a world where it's normal that thieves attacks a village.

If I can't log out, it's possible that I'm going to have to kill somebody again.

I will not be able to avoid that.

If I can't avoid that, it's likely that I'm going to be done for, thinking this is just a game.

When it's important I have to be cold, or I'm going to suffer.

The opponent was a thief.

I don't need to be depressed or worried.

If i didn't do it, they would have done something to me.

It's necessary that I have to accept this reality.

I breathe deeply one more time and prepare myself.

This is reality.

And, this is the world I'm going to live in from now on,

To live, it's necessary to dirty my own hands. I don't need to fear that.

I must do whatever is necessary.

This reminds me, there is another reason to think that this place is from the settings I have chosen.

I try to think about the character reset.

The character screen appears in my mind.

It seems that it's possible to move the cursor in the image.

Resetting the character with the bonus points appear to be possible.

As expected, all of the setting is adjusted.

Even the last warning is included.

I don't know why the bonus points became 1.

I used them completely, did I failed to notice?

For the time being, I closed the character setting.

I'm going to change to the clothes that the village chief brought me.

The shirt and the trouser are large. Though both are indigo, the color of the trouser is darker.

Although they are stiff and uncomfortable, it's not to the point I can't wear them.

Michio Kaga Man 17 Years

Villager Lv2 Thief Lv2

Equipment : Sandals boots - Ring of determination

Apparently this does not count as equipment.

I don't have Durandal in my equipment, must be because I removed it from my waist.

By the way, should I remove the bonus equipment?

Durandal is certainly an amazing sword. A very amazing sword. I felt it when I was fighting the thieves.

Aiming with it was very easy.

If this is a game, they can't steal it.

But, if this is not a game, there is no such restriction.

I have sandal boots on. This certainly belongs to somebody.

If I can make the sandals boots from someone mine, they can make Durandal their's too.

This is dangerous for two reasons.

First, if they steal my Durandal, there is the possibility I will lost the 63 bonus points.

The bonus points are the few allies I have in this world.

No, you can say they are the only allies I have (the 99 points).

I cannot lose them.

Secondly, the person that stole Durandal might be aiming for my life.

What is the death penalty in this world?

The level decrease and you revive in the church?

In any case, it's better if I don't carry Durandal often.

If it's really necessary, I can just reset the points.

The moment Durandal is stolen, I only have to erase it.

Let's try to enter the setting when I don’t have Durandal.

…I can’t tamper with the level 6 weapon armament setting.

The ring is equipped, so I can change its setting.

Like I figured, when Durandal is stolen, I lost the bonus points.

I close the character setting and carry Durandal.

I reopen the character setting in my mind.

I remove armament 6. The bonus points became 67.

How should i use the bonus points?

I chose necessary experience 1/10 and increased experience x10. Bonus points remained: 35

I chose necessary experience 1/20, bonus points: 3.

I chose Job setting and third job (bonus points 2), bonus points 0.

The character setting closed.

Durandal has disappeared.

I think about job setting.

My job appears in my mind.

Villager Lv2 Thief Lv2 Hero Lv1.

Because I choose the third job in character reset, it increases by one.

When I choose Hero Lv1, the information appears in my mind.

Hero Lv1

Effect : Increased HP - Increased MP - Increased physical strength - Increased stamina -

Increased wisdom - Increased spirit - Increased dexterity - Increased agility

Skill : Over howl

(TL: I don't know how to translate that skill, but I think it's like a war cry)

Did I have it from the beginning?

No, that is impossible.

If I acquired the thief job when I stole the sandal boots, then the hero job comes after.

Maybe it was when I defended the village from the thieves.

I tried to change my first job to hero but I couldn't do it.

I can only choose villager or thief as the first job. Why?

The effect of villager is an insignificance increased of stamina. No skills. Quite shabby.

It can't be helped, I'm setting the third job as hero Lv1.

The effect of hero is amazing. At least it can't be compared to villager.

The second job is thief Lv2.

The effect of thief is a very small increased in agility.

It’s better than villager,

The job setting is finished, the status is confirmed.

Michio Kaga Man 17 Years

Villager Lv2 Hero Lv1 Thief Lv2

Equipment : Sandals boots

Chapter 5 - Examination

「Excuse me. Is it alright to come in?」

The village chief came again.

「Ah, I don’t mind. What happened? 」

This is not good. I’m becoming arrogant because of his attitude.

Rather, the village chief regards me too highly.

I’m just a mere high school student.

Well, although I called myself a student, it doesn't matter here.

I’m only an ordinary person, passing by here, moreover, a Lv2.

「Because we already collected the equipment, please examine them.」

With the borrowed power of Durandal, I slaughtered the thieves like grasshopper, so they are cautious of me.

It wouldn't be good if my sword turns against them.

But it’s also not possible for them to ignore the benefactor who saved the village. If you act imprudent and cold, you will receive ill will too.

From the position of the village chief, I am nothing but a troublesome existence.

They can do nothing but wait for me to leave, it’s that type of strategy.

「Understood」

Though I say that, I didn't understand anything.

Examine what?

It’s fine to make the equipment mine?

Because I defeated the thieves, their equipment is going to be mine.

If there is someone strong, and the villagers are weak, the strong one can act as he pleases through violence.

「This way」

「Is it okay for me to take the equipment?」

I asked the village chief while we walk.

「Yes. Michio-sama defeated the thieves, naturally the equipment belongs to Michio-sama」

「Is it so?」

It seems that the equipment is going to be mine.

It’s not like there are police or justice like modern times, so maybe this is the norm.

「This time, the villagers has defeated two thieves. Therefore, I want to distribute two portions of the equipment to them, would that be alright?」

The villagers only defeated two thieves?

This reminds me, they only exchanged some blows.

I, who have Durandal, only needed one hit.

「Understood. I don’t mind」

I don’t know what is normal in this world so I’m going to accept the proposal.

They probably only won thanks to me, but if I take everything, surely there will be complaints.

It’s better if I don't do that.

Currently, I’m just a villager Lv2. I don’t have Durandal with me now, if all the villagers get serious it’s going to be dangerous.

「Thank you very much. Let me give you thanks on behalf of the village」

As expected, they don’t take another attitude towards the Lv2 me.

「Don’t worry」

Perhaps, because appraisal is a bonus skill, the village chief and the villagers can't use it.

The villagers may think that my lvl is 30 or more.

Because most villagers can't defeat the thieves.

The highest lvl among the villagers was 25 and he was defeated by the leader, in the village there is no one that can match me.

If that is the case, then that's why they are lowering themselves and praise me.

The place I was guided to was a corner at the edge of the village, they placed the equipment there.

A man was standing there.

Bikka Man 31 Years

Merchant Lv6

Equipment : Armor of wood - Shoes of leather

Maybe he is the merchant I saw this morning.

「His name is Bikka, the only merchant in the village」

「I am called Bikka. This time you have saved the village and everyone, i cannot express how grateful i am」

「I'm Michio. Don't exaggerate so much」

I'm glad they are thanking me, but I don't like to hear that from people I just met.

「Understood. Here are the equipments of the thieves」

I examine the equipment.

Armor of leather : Body Equipment

Boots of leather : Foot Equipment

Sword of copper : Sword of both hands

It seems that everything is ordinary.

「××××××××××」

「Oh, really? The villagers who defeated the thieves are going to be glad」

「I don't care」

「××××××××××」

The villager chief seems to have spoken with the merchant about the two portions of the equipment.

If only they will speak in brahim.

「Does Michio-sama have any capacity left in your space?」

The merchant asks.

「Space?」

Shit.

A term I don’t know. Do I have capacity left in my space?

「Is my brahim unskillful? Its space to store the equipment」

「……Maybe, there isn’t space left, I think」

I don't understand. The space I have left is not enough?

「Michio-sama is not an adventurer?」

「No, well, that kind of thing is..」

Is there any special meaning to an adventurer?

If I’m slow my facade is going to crumble.

「If someone is an adventurer, they can create a space to store the items and equipment, you can utilize a magic skill for the space. Maybe it is currently full because you stored your sword?」

The village chief shows me a lifeboat.

Is that so? It seems convenient.

There is a bag that is like an inventory, an item box.

After resetting, Durandal was gone.

From the perspective of the village chief, it seems like I have put it in my space.

「The inventory, eh?」

「The inventory?」

「Inventory, open. Item box, open. Tool bag. Item space..... Open.....」

I murmured in a low voice to see what happens, but nothing.

Is the command different? Guess I don't remember that.

In any case, it seems that I will not be able to use it for now.

The village chief and the merchant are looking at me with cold eyes, I have that feeling.

Muttering a weird thing, it's painful looking at me. It's too painful.

A patient who suffer from chuunibyou.

Calm, calm down my left hand.

「.....What's wrong?」

「I'm afraid to say that my space is full」

The truth is that I can't use it, I don't know where Durandal was send.

Or rather, where is Durandal?

「At the dawn of tomorrow, I'm going to the town Beiru to sell my goods. If you don't mind, you can transport the equipment in my wagon to the town. In Beiru there is a weapon shop and an armor shop. It's likely you can sell them in the city.」

The merchant offers.

I was hoping that this merchant would buy the equipment, but I was wrong.

Is he is going to take a little of the profit?

「I'm very grateful. I shall do that」

Maybe it's my job to sell my own equipment.

One leather armor and one leather boots.

I don't know if I can sell them. I'm grabbing two swords of cooper.

Sword of iron : Sword of both hands

What do I do with the iron sword?

It's one rank above the other equipment.

Even if I have something good, people may steal or aim for it.

But, it doesn't appear to be rare equipment, should i sell it?

「Here are the intelligence cards」

The merchant brings out a card, the size of a notepad.

「Intelligence card?」

What is that?

I repeat like a parrot.

「Among the thieves there are some with a bounty. Present this to the knights in Beiru to receive the reward」

「I see」

I understood the story.

If the thieves are rampaging, there should be a bounty.

And the card is proof that you defeated the thieves?

It seems this is common sense and everyone in this world knows about it.

I don’t want them to think something strange about me.

When receiving the card I didn't look strangely at it and just accepted. I remain calm and continue checking the equipment.

Sword of cooper : Sword of both hands

Sword of cooper : Sword of both hands

When I was checking the equipment, something strange occurred.

Sword of cooper : Sword of both hands

Skill : Empty

Durandal too has a skill attached.

Did something happen?

To me who hold the sword in my hand, the merchant ask with a sharp sight.

There is no skill called empty, I think this is an open skill slot.

「This is a good item」

「What do you mean?」

But then, I don’t know how to attach a skill.

「Skill. Skill slot. Grant skill. Manage skill」

I ended up murmuring again.

Nothing happened.

It doesn't change anything.

Perhaps I should say that murmuring doesn't change anything.

It only works while thinking about appraisal or the character settings.

「I heard that a blacksmith can attach the skill of a monster card, does that sword have any skills?

「No, it doesn't.」

「I see」

It seems that you need a specific job to apply the skill.

What is a monster card?

「However, this sword is not so bad. I will take it as part of my fees」

「You can see whether this does or does not have a skill?」

The village chief asks.

「Only generally. Let's call it the perception of an adventurer」

Because appraisal is a bonus skill, there should be few people who have it.

There is no need to talk about the fact that I have it.

「Like I said a moment ago about the sword the deceased villager was using. Could you examine it? If it's a good sword it can make the life of the family left behind easier」

「If I can understand it」

「Thank you very much. I will bring it immediately」

The village chief left.

Afterwards, I continue with the equipment.

It seems there isn't another with a skill or a skill slot.

Armor of iron : Body Equipment

Bandana : Head equipment

The two piece of equipment from the leader

Eh?

The equipment of the leader was a bandana?

Chapter 6 - Theft

Gear for thieves was arranged around the place including a bandana, however it was different to the one the level 41 bandit was wearing.

Maybe this one will become a thieves bandana if you put it on your head…. no, it was probably just a different piece of gear.

Then, what is this bandana….?

“What is this bandana?”

“I thought it was the one the bandit was wearing?”

The merchant doesn’t seem to understand.

Maybe I should be more forceful with my questioning.

There was no bandit wearing a plain bandana.

The bandana of the level 41 bandit is not here.

Possibly it was secretly switched with this bandana.

If this was Japan I’d back down because I don’t like attracting attention or trouble.

But this is not Japan.

In this world if I am defeated then everything ends.

I came to this world, I defended a village, and I killed a bandit (even if I didn’t do that for the village).

Maybe there is a misunderstanding.

No, it was definately a different bandana.

“The bandit wore a different bandana.”

“Huh….?”

The merchants face distorts in astonishment.

The merchant seems to be innocent, or very good at acting.

“××××××××××” (TN: people speaking in unknown language)

“××××××××××”

The village chief has returned.

He is also innocent judging by his reaction.

“No way…. we should investigate this. Please wait a moment.”

The village chief leaves quickly.

What will happen now?

I really feel like a Lv2 villager.

It won’t be good if this becomes a big commotion.

Can the stolen gear be found this easily?

If the village chief is involved I could be attacked by all the villagers, and I will not be able to win.

Was I too rash?

Even so, I’m annoyed at the theft and don’t like keeping silent.

It’s not good to be patient in this world.

At the very least I should prepare my Durandal.

When I look around I see a woman with three swords. She is probably a former adventurer.

“What about those swords?”

I try to ask the merchant.

“Hmmmm”

“May I see them?”

“××××××××××”

“××××××××××”

The merchant says something, and the woman holds out a sword.

Tirihi: 31yo female villager. Lv12

Sword: Flaming Rapier.

Is she the widow of an adventurer?

She has blond hair like someone from eastern europe.

She is slightly dusty from living in the country, but I’d welcome spending the night with her.

Even the villagers of this world are beautiful.

I’m itching to ask for her help at night.

She is a widow and….

Ah, my delusions are starting to explode.

I'm the hero who saved the village.

Shouldn't I press this for a nighttime "reward"?

They are very friendly here.

I take the sword in my hand.

Rapier: One handed sword.

Skill: Flame sword.

"This looks like quite a good sword."

"Is it?"

I hold it out.

"Flame Sword!"

I swing the Rapier.

…

Nothing happened.

The sword was just shaken.

Tirihi and the merchant are looking at me suspiciously.

I think I passed a game flag.

An incantation is floating in my head.

Should I recite this?

This sword definitely has the skill of a flame sword.

There might be an effect of flames while cutting.

“I call upon my heart, release your power in a torrent. Flame Sword!”

I recite the incantation, and flames cover the blade of the rapier.

Hmm.

Awesome!

“Ha~u ……”

Tirihi also looks surprised.

Isn’t this your husbands sword?

Maybe I shouldn’t have said anything?

In the edge of my view I see the village chief talking to a villager.

The villagers seem to have seen the flames and look surprised.

What happens if I steal something? It would be good to find out.

Though I’m already wearing someone else’s sandals.

“××××××××××”

“××××××××××”

The merchant and Tirihi are also speaking.

I suddenly feel tired, not physically, but mentally.

Why is it?

Did using the skill consume MP?

Probably my magic is not strong enough.

Using this often is probably too much for a Lv2 villager.

“Do you think this is likely to sell well?”

The merchant asks.

“Sorry, I am not sure about it’s value.”

“It looks amazing.”

“I just don’t know what a good price is for this sort of thing. You should take this to a weapon shop to be valued.”

I don’t even know what the value of the currency is like in this world.

“××××××××××”

“××××××××××”

The merchant says something and Tirihi comes towards me.

I return the flame sword, and Tirihi passes me a second sword.

Scimitar: One handed sword.

Skill: (Empty) (Empty)

There are two unused skill slots on this sword.

It seems like this sword is quite good also.

“This doesn’t have any skills, but it is still quite a good sword.”

“An adventurer who died used to take really good care of it.”

Do they know there is empty skill slots on it?

Maybe you need an adventurers intuition.

“You should check the value of this at a weapon store as well. They might buy it.”

“××××××××××”

“××××××××××”

I return the sword to Tirihi.

Dagger: One handed sword.

The last sword seems to be just a plain dagger.

It’s probably not very valuable.

“This is a plain dagger. It isn’t bad, but the value won’t be high, however it is easy for women to use. As a memento of a former adventurer you should treasure it.”

I pass the dagger back to Tirihi.

“××××××××××”

After hearing from the merchant Tirihi’s eyes redden.

While holding back tears, Tirihi leaves with the swords.

I think I’ve reminded her of her husband, and passed a flag.

After Tirihi has left, the village chief enters with several men.

“I am sorry. This man secretly swapped the bandana’s.”

A man wearing wooden handcuffs is looking down behind the village chief.

Did he do it on his own, or is he a scapegoat?

“××××××××××”

“××××××××××”

“Here is the correct item.”

When the village chief urges it the next man presents a bandana.

It is the thieves bandana.

There is no skill on the bandana.

“Yes, this is it.”

“And, the punishment for this man….?”

The village chief looks at my expression.

I understand what they want.

It won’t become a serious matter if they handle it within the village.

“Your village rules will be fine. I won’t object to how you handle it”

I think I’m pretty good at reading the mood.

“I understand”

The village chief seems to be a bit disappointed.

Did I misunderstand something?

“××××××××××”

“××××××××××”

The village chief says something to the criminal.

He is pulled forward by the handcuffs.

“Intentions of the soul, breath of wisdom, intelligence card, open!”

When the village chief recites the incantation, a card appears from the back of the criminals left hand.

What’s going on?

Awesome!

It’s the same as when I got the intelligence card from the thieves some time ago.

How did this happen?

The village chief mutters something to the criminals card.

“What did you just do?”

“I added the slave status to his intelligence card. He’ll remain a slave now until we release him, or until a fine is paid.”

“Okay”

It’s confusing.

I guess somehow the intelligence card contains important information about someones life.

It’s probably also proof for thieves with bounty’s on their heads.

“Our village rule states that if there is a theft, the criminal will become a slave and then sold off. Half of the money from selling them will go towards their family, and the other half will go to their victim.”

It’s quite severe.

So this is how someone becomes a slave.

I understand it now.

I would have liked the village chief to have told me this from the start.

As the victim I feel it didn’t need to go this far, but it’s too late to say that now.

“It’s a first offense, I don’t mind if you show mercy.”

“I understand. I apologize on behalf of the village.”

“The criminal has been caught. As the village chief you don’t need to apologize.”

“Thank you, has the inspection of the equipment finished?”

“Yes”

“Then please come by my house. Breakfast is nearly ready.”

“Thank you.”

I am glad we changed the topic.

I think I’ll try and leave this place quickly.

Chapter 7 - Demon

“Please stay at this house tonight, I will organize dinner.”

The village chief says this as we eat breakfast.

Breakfast is salad and cheese with oatmeal.

It isn’t really tasty, but it’s not bad either.

If I can have meals of this level I might be able to survive in this world after all.

Dinner will probably be something a bit nicer because it’s the village chief preparing something for the hero who saved the village.

There was no mention of lunch. In the past humans only ate two large meals a day, which may still be common in this world.

“I will take you up on that offer.”

“The merchant will be taking a carriage to Vale tomorrow. He’ll be leaving quite early so make sure to have an early night if you want to go along.”

“How long does it take to get to Vale?”

“Around three hours by carriage”

I wonder if three hours is the same as earth time?

If the merchant leaves at 8:00am, then he should arrive by 11:00am. If he plans to return here the same day then he’ll probably leave there at 3:00pm to arrive back here at 6:00pm. This means he’ll be in Vale for 4 hours. (TN If Jimmy has 5 apples, and you take 3….)

The merchant said he’s just picking up stock, so it might be shorter.

Maybe he'll leave before the sun rises.

There is more chance of finding a good bargain if he is early.

"I would like to go then."

"I'll let the merchant know."

Now, what will I do until then?

"Are there monsters near the village?"

"There are demons."

"Ah, ok."

So, they are called demons.

"If you go into the depths of the forest you'll find the slow rabbit."

"I see, I might go and fight that."

Even though it has a weak sounding name, it should help me get information.

There is always the possibility it's a strong demon too.

I had better not make any assumptions.

"The slow rabbit does not attack people, so it is a reasonably easy fight."

"Really? Have you fought them?"

Sounds like it will be an easy victory.

I can kill time fighting some.

“Do you want to hunt the slow rabbit?”

The village chief dropped his voice a bit.

Hmmmm.

Did I misunderstand something?

“You said it was an easy fight.”

“A group of several villagers can defeat them, so for you it should be an easy win.”

“Is that so?”

It might be reasonably strong if it takes several people.

“If you defeat it, it drops fur, and on rare occasions it will drop meat.”

So the rabbits fur drops every time, but meat is a rare drop.

I have trouble understanding the reason.

“Is there any problem if I go demon hunting?”

“Hunting demons is fine.”

Maybe it would have been better if there was a problem.

If it takes several people then maybe it’s dangerous.

However I guess I’ll have to hunt my first demon eventually.

Since I will have to, it’s probably better to do sooner rather than later.

I don’t think I have a death wish. Sure if I go chasing trouble I may die, but I’ll die a man.

Though I guess visiting the suicide website was how I first came to this world.

Committing suicide, or being killed by a demon. I guess in the end there is not much difference.

I said that I'll go, so I will.

Well, it's a slow rabbit.

"I'll head to the depths of the forest before dinner."

I'll manage somehow with my durandal.

The village chief said it will be an easy victory.

"There is a young person in the village that would like to hunt a slow rabbit, would you be interested in going together?"

"Hmmmm."

"It will be good experience if they go with you."

What should I do?

Of course it might be safer with a companion.

However it might be troublesome if people find out I am weak.

I have caused one man who lived in the village to become a slave. His family may retaliate if they find out.

"Sorry, but I'll decline. I've never fought one before so I'm not sure if I can look after a companion."

"Oh, I see. Sorry I've been a bit too forward."

I made up a good reason and decline the offer.

After the meal, I grabbed the thieves card, and the copper sword.

I then headed into the depths of the forest.

The demon did not show up.

In a game, monsters would be appearing just a single step outside the village.

Though if I think about it, they wouldn't make the village in such a dangerous place.

"Intelligence card, open!"

Since I am alone, I try something interesting.

…

Though, nothing happened.

Maybe the incantation was different, or it's not something I can learn after hearing it just once.

Do I have an intelligence card?

Thinking about it makes me feel anxious.

Finally I came across a strange animal.

It's about 50 centimeters long, and covered in white fur.

Is it the slow rabbit?

When I think about it, information appears.

Slow rabbit Lv1

Oh

It seems the judgement skill can be used.

It even shows the level.

It doesn't show how much strength the slow rabbit has.

I'll go in carefully with my durandal.

I brought up my character stats window.

I reset my stat points, and put points into 5x decrease in required experience til next level, and put points into 5x increased experience gain. There's 64 points remaining so I put them into weapon skill 6.

I have 1 bonus skill point.

What should I use it on?

Maybe a bonus incantation?

Meteor crash.

That sounds like a strong spell.

I select Meteor crash, and my character settings ends.

My durandal appears in my left hand.

If I use magic I might not need the durandal, but I don't know if I'll defeat it in one shot.

I hand the durandal at my waist.

It’s troublesome to keep two swords hanging at my waist, so for now I lean the copper sword against a tree.

I remove the durandal from it’s sheath and firmly grasp it with both hands.

The slow rabbit has not noticed me yet.

I’ll make a sneak attack from the shadows of the tree.

Go!

“Meteor Crash!”

I yelled.

…

…?

…

Nothing happens.

Nothing changes.

A light gust blows between me & the slow rabbit.

People would have laughed if they had seen this scene.

Thankfully I’m in the depths of the forest.

There is an incantation. It’s different.

The incantation appears in my head.

I try to use it.

“From the emptiness of space, the destruction of everything, Meteor Crash!”

This time it will work!

Or so I though. Nothing happens.

Nothing changes.

There’s the problem.

My MP is not enough.

I think the MP I used on the Flame sword, and my fatigue have both recovered after my meal.

I just don’t have enough total MP to activate Meteor crash while I’m Lv2.

Since there is no other way, I charge in with my durandal.

My body feels light. An effect of hero Lv1.

The slow rabbit turns towards me & stands up.

As expected, it doesn’t run away. Since I was told it takes several villagers to fight it, it should be stronger than one person.

However, I have a saint sword, durandal.

He will taste the sharpness of my durandal

I use it to slash down towards the demons shoulder.

My durandal cuts straight through the demon.

The slow rabbit has been defeated in a single blow.

Green smoke starts coming from the demons body, and the whole body begins to melt.

When the smoke stops, all that's left on the ground is a small white fur.

It is the fur of the slow rabbit.

No wonder.

The village mayor said it would drop fur.

I pick up the fur, and go back to where I left the copper sword.

The durandal feels like overkill, but I'll hunt another two slow rabbits with it.

It's possible the one I just killed was weaker than normal.

I leave the fur next to the copper sword, and continue on.

Using the durandal on the next two slow rabbits also felt like overkill.

It killed them in one strike each.

I now have 3 pieces of fur.

Should I try using the copper sword?

I reset my stat points again. Instead of weapon skill 6 I put the points into 10x bonus experience. My bonus skill point is at 0, the point I spent earlier is still in Meteor Crash.

I attacked the next slow rabbit with the copper sword.

I launch a splendid preemptive attack at the shoulder area.

Oh?

The sword does not penetrate at all.

Far from it, the sword barely did a thing.

I launch a second slash that goes as bad as the first.

It feels more like I'm just taunting it than cutting it.

The slow rabbit attacks me.

Danger!

Somehow I managed to avoid it.

In return I land another blow.

It's useless, there's no sign that I even did anything.

Even so, little by little the damage will still add up.

I continue attacking with the sword, while being cautious of it's attacks.

The only good thing is that it's movements are not quick.

Well, it's a slow rabbit.

As I think that, it jumps at me.

I move my head, but could not avoid it with my body.

Urgh.

There is a huge shock to my body.

This is dangerous, it could tear my whole body to pieces.

I strike with the sword repeatedly.

The slow rabbit dodges with it's head.

It manages to partially avoid it, but is still struck in the shoulder. It's starting to feel like I'm doing damage now.

The slow rabbit jumps at me again.

This time I read the attack and manage to avoid it. I get in a blow as it flies past on my right.

Is it still not enough?

I strike it again & again.

It sees a chance to attack and jumps again.

Urgh.

I was focusing too much on attacking and not on defense.

This is bad. If I'm hit much more I might die.

I avoid the next attack & regain my balance.

I knock it's head back, and strike a blow to it's belly with my sword.

The sword sliced in a bit, there is starting to be less resistance.

Haven't you died yet?

I strike it. I strike it. I strike it.

When I hit it a fourth time it finally falls to the ground.

It becomes smoke and disappears. Rabbit fur is left again.

"Phew."

While gasping for breath, I let out a sigh of relief.

My whole body is painful. Breathing is hard work.

That was dangerous.

There was a big difference between the durandal and the copper sword.

Or was this slow rabbit really strong?

That reminds me, the slow rabbit had a level.

I didn't check it. Wasn't it Lv1?

I'll do future battles using the durandal.

I'm not sure how many attacks it took with the copper sword.

The durandal has the HP absorption skill.

Defeating enemies with it recovers my HP.

I place the fur and the copper sword with the other furs, and take the durandal.

Slow rabbit Lv1.

It was.

I swing the durandal as I run at it.

The slow rabbit disappears, and a fur appears.

The pain in my body eased a bit.

I think I've absorbed some HP, it's not a placebo effect.

If I hunt one or two more I should have a complete recovery.

I return to the copper sword and leave the fur there, and then I go hunting again.

Slow rabbit Lv1.

So, it's Lv1 too.

The slow rabbit will try to run from people, but if they get into a fight they fight well.

However, if I launch a preemptive strike, it's an easy win with the durandal because I can kill it with one blow.

The preemptive strike decides it, it's killed in one shot.

The slow rabbit becomes smoke and fades away.

This time there is an item that is not a fur.

Rabbit's meat.

Is this rabbits meat?

Should I give it to the village chief for tonight's dinner?

I'll get the furs and return to the village.

Status check!

Kaga Michio: Male, 17 years old.
Villager Lv3
Hero Lv1
Thief Lv3
Equipment: durandal, sandals.

Oh, I’ve leveled up!

Chapter 8 - Farming in the afternoon

When I kill demons, my experience points go up.
Earning experience from hunting demons is the best way to raise my level.

My bonus points have increased by 1 for some reason, maybe because my level increased.

I have a feeling my bonus points increased when I hit Lv2 also.

It will be a great system if my bonus points increase every time I gain a level.

I wonder how people without the character reset skill use them.

It would be a hard decision.

Something you are stuck with for life.

That would be truly cruel.

Anyway, I've worked out how to raise my level.

The next problem is how to increase my jobs.

I have the Villager job from the beginning.

The thief job I picked up somehow.

Hero might be because I protected the village from a thief.

The other jobs I've seen currently are village chief, merchant & farmer.

I'm not sure how I can become a village chief, maybe if I do the things a village chief does.

Or maybe only NPC's can become one.

Maybe if you do a good job you replace the existing village chief.

I can possibly ask the merchant how to become a merchant.

But what about a farmer?

Now that I think about it, I got the thief job when I stole the sandals.

Maybe farmer is the same as thief? I just have to do some work on a farm to get it.

Farming.

Maybe I can do it in the village?

I put away the durandal & return to the village.

I was thinking maybe I should try using my copper sword, and maybe putting up to 5 points into weapons.

However, if I don't kill stuff in one strike I might get attacked.

The HP absorption of the durandal is necessary to recover.

Maybe the right idea is to alternate swords?

The copper sword is hanging at my waist, my right hand has the five rabbit furs, and I have the rabbit meat in my left hand.

The rabbit fur is quite small. How many will I need if I want to make a fur coat?

Maybe 100-200 pieces, or more.

They probably don't sell well.

Well, it's a demon that even a beginner can hunt if they have a durandal.

Ah, Mr durandal.

I enter the back of the village from the forest, and return to the village chief's house.

"Please use this with dinner."

I give the village chief the rabbit meat.

"I can have this?"

"Yes, I thought it might help with dinner."

"Certainly. This…. is rabbit meat!"

The village chief was surprised.

Even though he was the one who told me about rabbit meat dropping.

"It dropped by chance."

"You need to kill around ten slow rabbits to get rabbit meat."

"Hmmm"

So the drop rate is 10%?

"Michio, the gods must love you if this dropped on your first try."

"No, I didn't get it from the first one."

I lift my right hand.

"No way……"

The village chief swallows his saliva.

Why is he surprised?

He told me it would be an easy victory.

“You said it isn’t a strong demon.”

“I knew you could defeat it, but this many when only half a day has passed…”

“That’s really quick?”

The sun is still high in the sky, there is plenty of time before sunset.

“Many villagers are needed to fight a slow rabbit, and it’s a long fight before they can finally defeat it.”

“I see.”

I did have a hard time while using the copper sword.

But the durandal killed it in a single blow.

“It even takes a long while to recover physical strength after fighting one. Treatment is also needed if there are wounded. They are not normally hunted in succession.”

“Ahh.”

If they are using copper swords, they will probably be hit by the jump attack. Is the recovery of physical strength even necessary after receiving attacks?

For me, the HP absorption of durandal also recovers physical strength.

“You’re too strong Michio! People who can kill slow rabbits on their own in such a short time don’t normally come to this village.”

“Is that so?”

The villagers may think I am amazing.

That’s fine.

I don’t feel bad if they think I am strong.

“If you can, please sell the furs to the merchant. We sew them up in this village, even though we can’t hunt many.”

“Ok, I’ll do that.”

Since the slow rabbit lives near here, it might be a specialty of this village.

I wonder if I’d get more selling it elsewhere?

“Thanks, the merchants house is three houses along.”

“Ok, I’ll head over there.”

“Wait a minute.”

When I try to leave the village chief asks me to wait.

“××××××××××”

“××××××××××”

The village chief calls out, and a woman who seems to be his wife comes out carrying something.

“Please use this bag.”

“Oh, thank you.”

The village chief passes the bag to me.

It’s a small bag like a pouch, that has a drawstring to pull it closed.

I put the rabbit furs into the bag.

“Then, I’ll be off now.”

I head to the merchants place, three houses along.

I did not hear if it’s right or left.

“Maybe that place?”

There is a house where the entrance is wide open. Maybe it’s a shop? It doesn’t really look like one.

Should I equip the negotiations skill?

I used my character reset skill.

I uncheck Meteor crash, and place the check next to negotiations.

It causes a rise of 10% is sale prices.

This pattern again? (TN, I’m not sure about the pattern, the details on stat resets are very hard to figure out from MT’s).

I am able to spend 64 points.

The sale price went up. 15, 20, 25 and barely scraped in to 30%.

“Excuse me.”

I called out, and entered the house I thought was the merchants.

“It’s Michio, I’d like to do some business.”

The merchant from earlier comes out.

“What do you sell here?”

“This is the only shop in the village, I mainly take orders, and aquire the items from the city.”

There is no merchandise?

It seems quite pitiful.

Is this civilizations level like this?

“There is no shop with items?”

“….merchants who always have stock on hand…. I think slave dealers are like that.”

The merchant sounded a bit suspicious.

It’s expected that slaves can’t just be obtained when required.

So a slave trader always has some stock on hand. Other stores just have stock on demand.

By chance, did it seem like I came to buy the slave?

“That sounds strange to me, though I’m from the country.”

I quickly made something up.

“I don’t think there are stores like that in the country.”

“There aren’t, I heard someone say there were shops like that in towns.”

“Is that so? In the town of Vale there is no such thing. Maybe bigger towns have armor & weapon stores like that.”

“Since I’m from the country, it might have just been a made up story. Don’t worry about it, I actually came here to show you these rabbit furs.”

I changed the subject.

“It’s rabbits fur?”

“Yes, and the village chief suggested I sell them here.”

I take the furs out of the drawstring bag.

“These… are quite good quality.”

There are five of them.

I probably don’t need to say I just hunted them.

“Will you buy them?”

“The market price for furs is 20 nars each.”

“Hmmm.”

I don’t understand the value, even if he says 20 nars.

“I will give you 130 nars for them all.”

20 nars each for five furs should be 100 nars, and it wonderfully became 130 nars.

How did that happen?

I won’t complain if he’s paying well.

“That is good.”

“Here.”

The merchant places many copper coins and a white coin on the table.

Is the white coin a silver coin? Is the silver coin worth 100 nars?

…..26, 28, 30. I have received it.”

I count out 30 copper coins.

I put the small change into the drawstring bag that held the furs.

The merchant put away the rabbit furs.

“We have the kyupiko fruit growing in our vegetable garden, I’d like to give you some as thanks for this trade.”

“Kyupiko?”

“Yes, it’s something I’ve grown with some good quality seedlings that I think could become a specialty product of our village.”

It was something I had never heard of.

Maybe only people of this world are familiar with it?

“I see.”

“Wait here a minute please.”

“Could I have a look at where the kyupiko comes from?”

The merchant stops.

This could be a chance for some farming labor.

“You want to see it Michio?”

“Since I am from the country it sounds interesting.”

“Ok, then lets head out to the vegetable garden together.

The merchant and I went outside.

“Does everyone have a vegetable garden?”

“Yes, everyone in the village maintains small vegetable gardens.”

The merchant and I chat while we walk.

Information gathering is always useful.

“I thought there were farmers in this village?”

“Yes, there is a man who is a member of the farmers guild managing a field just outside of town.”

“Farmers guild….”

Is there such a thing?

“All farmers around here belong to the farmers guild.”

I don’t quite understand it, but it seems to be serious.

Even if I do farming work, is it useless?

“Oh, and what about becoming a merchant?”

I secretly used my judgement skill to check the merchants title.

The judgement skill is very convenient.

“I also belong to the merchants guild.”

So I probably have to join the farmers guild to become a farmer, and the merchants guild to become a merchant.

“So, if I want to become a merchant then I have to join the guild?”

“Are you interested in becoming a merchant Michio?”

“No, I’m just wondering about it.”

I quickly deny it.

“I thought you would already be in a guild?”

“I haven’t joined one yet.”

I act embarrassed.

“Your not an adventurer? I thought you would be part of the adventurers guild?”

“I’m not an adventurer yet.”

So there is one.

There is such thing as an adventurers guild.

“Your really not part of a guild?”

I guess it was unexpected.

“Well…”

“You might already know, but you can only join one guild, and there are severe restrictions on leaving that guild.”

“Oh.”

So it’s like that?

“Joining the merchants guild is quite easy.”

“I just need to register with it?”

“Yes, and you can’t become one if you don’t get their approval.”

“I understand.”

I said I understand, but I don’t really.

It sounds a bit like a strange procedure.

“Also, there is a wealthy merchant guild. You can’t get into it unless you have alot of experience.”

“Oh.”

I don’t understand it well, but I guess a wealthy merchant is a higher ranked merchant?

I toss in words of agreement as we head to the vegetable garden.

At the edge of the village there are fields spread out.

“This is our vegetable garden.”

“Oh, it’s big!”

It’s strange to call such a good sized area a vegetable garden. There are several kinds of different plants in it.

The plants are the same as those on earth.

There’s a carrot!

There is a plant about a meter high with red carrots hanging from it.

Wait. Do carrots really grow this way?

Hmmmm.

Was the carrot a type of fruit?

“That one is the kyupiko.”

The merchant tells me as he approaches the carrot.

“Oh.”

So it’s not a carrot, it’s a kyupiko?

A carrot is a root. It does not grow this way.

“When it becomes red it is ready to eat, try it.”

“It’s fine to pick off by hand?”

The merchant nods, so I pick one.

“….how is it?”

After picking two, the merchant asks me this with uneasiness.

Did you say you wanted to make this a specialty product?

“Carrots don’t grow around here?”

“Ginseng? You can probably find that in the forest.”

There doesn’t seem to be carrots in this world.

It doesn’t matter, because it is not a food I favor.

It should be fine to eat, it feels slightly hard.

“It resembles a vegetable from where I lived.”

“Oh.”

The merchant watches me expectantly.

“It is bearing fruit well.”

“How is the taste?”

Have you tried it?

I make up my mind, and bite into the thing that looks like a carrot.

Oh!

It’s quite tasty.

Yes, the taste is not bad at all.

Like a slightly sour cherry.

But with the appearance of a carrot.

The difference gives a strange feeling.

“It has a good taste and should sell well.”

“You think so? Thank you.”

The merchant thanks me with a relieved expression.

The day is coming to an end.

I decide to hurry back.

On the way back, I open my character settings and check my jobs.

Farmer Lv1

Effect: small strength rise.

It's there.

It was obtained unexpectedly easily.

I got the farmer job from harvesting fruit.

I can set it as my first job.

I could also switch Hero to my first job, but I don't think there is any point.

Since I can only have three active jobs, I need to disable one.

Should I choose the slight stamina rise from villager, or the small strength rise from farmer?

If I move stat points out of bonus experience, I can force a 4th job to be set.

My body felt extremely light while fighting the slow rabbit, and I think that was the effect of job bonuses overlapping.

Though it's possible that only the strongest of two similar bonuses is active.

Even so, it should still be good to learn more jobs.

The problem is experience.

If I set 4 active jobs, my experience gain might get worse.

Thief is currently set to my third job, and has risen to Lv3, so all active jobs might take a share of my experience.

So if I get a fourth job, will all of them only get a quarter of my experience?

If experience is divided, it will be harder to raise levels.

But what about if it's not divided?

More jobs would be better after all.

Three jobs would be three times more experience, and for jobs would be four times more.

This would make my bonus experience stat even more efficient.

I replace villager Lv3 with farmer Lv1 as my first job.

Kaga Michio: Male, 17 years old.
Farmer Lv1
Hero Lv1
Thief Lv3
Equippment: copper sword, sandals.

Do the first & third job positions have any differences?

Should I switch the position of the higher level Thief Lv3 with the first job?

Though people don't really like thieves, so hopefully this job is hidden a bit if it's in the lowest position.

When I get back to the village chiefs house, dinner had just finished being prepared.

Dinner was a stew made from the rabbits meat, with some kind of stir-fry made with fish as the main dish.

Both are really delicious.

It seems the dishes in this world are of quite a good standard.

Dinner left me quite satisfied, so I went to bed early to be ready for tomorrow.

Hmmm, Tirihi?

The life of a villager Lv25.
0 years old.
Born in a country village.
Parents are both villagers, and there are three older brothers.

10 years old.
Since I am not the first son, I think I should probably leave the house some time in the future.
I don't really want to become a soldier. but there is not many job options around here. I want to live freely. Hopefully I can become an adventurer.

12 years old.
There is a demon subjugation near the village, so I join in.

17 years old.
I become the leader of the town guard.
I guard merchants that travel out of town, and I learn a lot about the outside world.

18 years old.
A strong demon attacked the town.
I lead the fight, but a lot of villagers die, and surrounding fields are destroyed.
This causes a famine, and disease strikes some of the weakened villagers.

19 years old.
My family died from illness, so I left the village & headed to a town.
I lower my head to an adventurer I knew and am allowed to join a party. I changed my job to explorer. The treatment isn't good.

33 years old.
I fall in love with Tirihi(17 years old).
However, I am employed as an explorer, and I can't approach her.

35 years old.
I work hard on raising my level, and make it to Lv50
I switched jobs to adventurer, and joined the adventurers guild.

I leave the party and become independent. Tirihi is now 19 years old and I try to approach her.
Life felt good. I also got a rapier.

37 years old.
I married Tirihi (21 years old).
I have trouble as an adventurer. Since I was a low ranked party member for years, my equipment isn't good. I don't have good contacts either. I exist just hanging around the adventurers guild.

40 years old.
I have bad luck, and suffer an injury.
The adventurers guild tries to make me work, even with my injury. The let me leave the guild, with the condition that I abandon the job of adventurer, and return to being a villager.
Tirihi & I return to my home town and live together.

41 years old.
We have a son.
I help the village hunt demons. Even without the adventurer job, I am still quite skilled with a sword.
I spend my days fighting demons for the village, and looking after my wife & child who I love.

47 years old.
I fight with a thief who attacked the village, and I die in battle.

Chapter 9 - Another paths end, according to a special volume.

The hero's delusion.

This is another path, where Tirihi visited his bed during the night.

It's totally a delusion, it has no relevance to the main story.

There is no problem if you continue reading the story without reading this chapter.

Future events will be different to this, including characters and settings. It does have heroines appear that have not yet been introduced.

Even though the series title is "Harem", there is no heroine until chapter 11.

Well, if you include this chapter, the first heroine will not appear until chapter 12.

I will try to write more quickly.

Please don't throw things at me.
——————————————————————

"Is there something in this village Master?"

Miria asks with her cat ears raised.

"No, there is probably nothing."
"There doesn't seem to be any kind of resort here either."

Sherry looks around restlessly also.
Is it from curiosity rather than caution?

“It’s just somewhere I came a long time ago.”

I put my hand on her head.

I enter the village with them.

It’s been a long while, and things change over time, but this village has hardly changed at all and feels quite nostalgic.
There should be a barn just to the right as I enter the village.

Bikka. 41 year old male. Merchant Lv14.

There is a man in front of the barn.
It’s a face that I remember.
His level hasn’t gone up much over ten years though.

“××××××××××”

He says something, but as usual I don’t understand it.

“××××××××××”
“××××××××××”

Roxanne responds, and the merchant gives a small bow and heads into the village.
He should have been able to speak even in the brahim language.

“Master, do you have some business to do here?”
“Yes, please buy some Kyupiko from the merchant.”

I request Roxanne.

Roxanne takes Miria and leaves. I head towards the barn.
There is one horse in the barn.

“It’s a barn.”

Sherry says as she comes up beside me.

“Master, why are we at the barn?”
“Hmm, I wonder why I came here.”

I look over to Vesta who is standing at my left, then up at the roof of the barn.
I didn’t want to say I came here because I was feeling a bit homesick.

“Huh?”

Vesta answers with suspicion, and I give her back a light pat.

Ten years ago this barn is the first place I appeared when I came to this world.
My journey started here.
It’s hard to remember if it looks exactly the same as it did a decade ago.

The merchant was here, so this barn probably belongs to him.

That’s probably it.
There probably aren’t many horses in this village, just one to pull a wagon.
The merchant has a wagon, so this horse is probably his, and the barn with the horse in it must be his too.
So, those Sandals belonged to the merchant.

“Do you remember me?”

I pat the horse as I speak to it.
It’s possible that it’s a different horse though since ten years have passed.

If it’s the same horse from that time, then it’s the first living thing I saw when I came to this world.

“Master, I got them.”

Miria comes from the other side of the road.
She has red fruit in both hands.

“You did?”
“Yes Master.”

Miria passes two kyupiko to me, and then goes back the way she came.
Roxanne comes from the other side as well.

“Hurry up Nee-san!”
“Ok.”

Miria runs to Roxanne and pulls her by the hands.
Roxanne starts running along.

I handed the fruit that looks like a carrot to Sherry and Vesta.
I wait for Roxanne.

“You spoke to him?”
“Yes master, it seems this is a specialty of this village.”
“Really?”

The merchant seems to have succeeded in his cultivation.

“Master, here you go.”

Roxanne takes a kyupiko from her bag with a smile and passes it to me.
This smile hasn’t changed over ten years.
I accept the kyupiko from Roxanne.
I take another and pass one to Rutina.

“Thank you Master.”

Rutina bows her head. Her long elven ears sticking from her pretty blonde hair are beautiful.
While looking at her with eyes of admiration, I noticed Miria looking at me

expectantly.
I've eaten one before though.

I bite into the kyupiko.

Yes, kyupiko.
Hmm, was the taste like a cherry?
It's hard to remember what a cherry tastes like.

"It's delicious."
"Ah, that's good."

I put my hand on Miria's head. It's nice being allowed to pat a cat girl.
Patting feels really good.

I looked at the villages vegetable garden.
What kind of plant was the kyupiko?

There's a small boy working in the vegetable garden.
He's admirable looking with jet-black hair.

… a black haired boy?

He keeps disappearing and reappearing as he works behind chest height crops.

There are a lot of blonde and brown haired people around here.
Black hair is a minority.
Was there anyone with black hair in this village?

With a strange feeling in my chest, I use judgement.

Mio. 9 years old male. Villager Lv1.

…

Mio and Michio.

Ok.
It's like that.

It probably is.
Is that right?
Even though he hasn't inherited the family name?

Is this possibly my child?

"Nyaa…"

I'm still patting Miria, and she's letting her voice out a bit.
She's fully satisfied with the sweetness of the fruit and her ears being patted.

"Roxanne, can you interpret?"
"Yes Master."

I go to the vegetable garden.

"Do you have a moment?"
"××××××××××"

After Roxanne speaks, the boy comes out of the vegetable garden.
That face… is it similar?

"What are you growing?"
"××××××××××"
"××××××××××"

"The Kyupiko."

That's what it looks like.
The red fruit.

"How are your parents?"
"××××××××××"

“××××××××××”
“My mother is doing well, but father died before I was born.”

Really?
So that’s how it is.

I pull a sword out of the item box.

Scimitar of Anger. 5 x attack power, HP absorption.

It’s an old sword that I no longer use.
It’s quite good because of it’s passive skills.

“Do you do what your mother tells you to do properly?”
“××××××××××”

After Roxanne interprets, the boy nods.

“I have a feeling that I knew your father.”
“××××××××××”
“I will give this sword to you, and if your mother thinks it’s ok then you can use it. Make sure to protect your mother.”
“××××××××××”

The boy watches the sword.
He seems to be extremely interested.

“Don’t decline.”
“××××××××××”

I gave him some prompting.

“When you use this sword you may think you have become strong, but it is this sword that is strong. You are not strong, don’t even forget that.”
“××××××××××”

I give a warning before I release the sword.
Would he listen to it?
It will embarrass me if he leaves his mother because of this and becomes an adventurer, bit it's his life.

I wait until Roxanne finishes interpreting and then finally release it.

"××××××××××"
"Thank you"

The boy bows greatly, and then runs away with the sword held like an important treasure.

Maybe his mother, Tirihi, is in their house.

"Master, that's the old sword that I treasured."
"Sorry, Roxanne, it's a sword which was mine first."
"I don't mind, it's just the first sword I received from Master."

Roxanne shows a smile as she remembers the old days.
It's beautiful whenever I see it.
Even after ten years it's a smile I never get tired of seeing.

"Let's go."

I'll probably come to this village again.
Or, maybe not.

With the village behind me, I use movement magic.
There are still fights in our future.

Please look forward to more work from Sogano Shachi.
(This series is still continuing)

Chapter 10 - Road

That night, Tirihi did not come to my room.

…I should have realized.

Of course I should have realized.

Though it would have made for a delicious story.

Maybe this is as far as I can get with my looks.

Or maybe she didn't come because she doesn't know where I'm staying?

It was lonely sleeping on my own, and I wake up in the village chiefs house in a room with a dirt floor.

I think I was dreaming about something, but I can't remember it.

I wake up expecting to see my apartment in Tokyo, but that's impossible.

Tirihi didn't come either, this is the worst way to wake up.

I sigh as I lay there on the bed.

The bed is shabby, made only of a mat & blanket on a board.

Is this how you treat someone well? I'm not sure yet since I don't know what the standards are like in this world.

Part of me thought this world might be virtual reality, but that idea was totally shattered when I went to the toilet.

If my body was lying in a hospital, that would have been great.

I'd rather not wake up.

But this is a real world, and I'm living here.

"Mmmm"

I stretch my arms.

"Excuse me."

I hear the village chiefs voice.

"Village chief?"

"Are you up already? It's nearly time to depart."

"Ok"

I leave the room with my luggage.

I call it luggage, but it's really only a copper sword, and a drawstring bag. In the bag I have the large sum of 130 nars, and the thieves intelligence card.

That is everything I own.

"Good morning."

"Yes, good morning."

"Here are your cloths from yesterday."

"Was there a jersey?"

I forgot.

The copper sword and drawstring bag are not everything I own.

I find the jersey on the stand near the front entrance.

It’s still dark in the entrance, but after opening the front door I see the first light of dawn appearing.

I wear the cloths I received instead of the jersey, but I take it with me.

“Your cloths are made from some very unusual cloth, they must be quite valuable.”

“No, they are not very valuable.”

The jersey was quite cheap.

Oh, polyester would not exist in this world.

“You can use this bag if you want.”

The village chief offers me a large bag.

There is a shoulder string on it.

It’s a rucksack.

“Hou”

“I’ve put breakfast in it. Please eat it in the wagon.”

“I’ll do that.”

I am grateful for the rucksack & breakfast.

I put the jersey & drawstring bag in to the rucksack with the breakfast.

Breakfast is wrapped up, but feels like a loaf of bread. I shouldn’t hope for something luxurious.

“Also, here is a reward for saving the village.”

The village chief gives me a drawstring bag, the same as the one I got yesterday.

“Oh?”

Casually I looked in the bag & saw coins inside.

In the low level of light I can see some bright yellow. Are they gold coins? There’s about ten of them.

“Sorry it isn’t much.”

“No, I’m very grateful for this.”

“This is the largest reward we can manage.”

After thinking a little, I accept it.

There is no downsides to taking it.

Since it was offered to me, there shouldn’t be any grudges if I accept it.

There is no benefit in declining.

I don’t want to stand out, and I don’t want a reputation of being a hero who works for free.

There isn’t any reason for me to show favoritism for this village either.

…and Tirihi did not show up.

I put the rucksack filled with all my luggage over my shoulder.

The village chief accompanies me outside.

We head towards the edge of the village & find the merchant there preparing the wagon.

“Good morning.”

“Good morning.”

I exchange greetings with the merchant.

“I’ll leave as soon as it gets light, Could you sit next to the coachman’s seat?”

“Sure.”

I got in the wagon.

It shakes a bit.

The cargo is the thieves accessories, Tirihi’s two swords, and a cage similar to a kennel.

Tirihi seems to not want to sell her dagger.

The cage is fully enclosed on three sides, and the fourth side has a lattice covering.

As I was wondering about it, a man was brought out & placed into the cage.

It’s the thief from yesterday.

“This man will be taken to Vale & sold to a slave trader.”

The village chief explains.

“Oh.”

“Half of the sale price will go to you Michio.”

“We got the right accessory back, the family can take all the money.”

“No, if we pass the family all the money then they can buy him straight back & this is no longer a punishment. Please accept your share.”

Ah.

That makes sense.

As a stranger I should not object to the law of the village.

I give a nod of agreement.

“××××××××××”

“××××××××××”

A man comes and exchanges some words with the burglar.

A young girl runs to her father without being told.

Even though I don’t understand what is said, I can understand the atmosphere.

This mans family speak to him with sadness.

“It’s become light enough, so let’s be off.”

The merchant climbs up beside me.

He flicks the reins & the horse starts moving.

The sun isn’t fully up yet, but this is light enough for the stretch near the village.

“Thank you for your help.”

“No, thank you for saving our village.”

The village chief & I say our farewells.

The wagon is now leaving the village.

I may never return here, but this will always be my first village.

I look back towards it and take one last look to etch into my memory.

A tarp covers the back of the wagon.

The man who became a slave is quietly behaving himself.

“Is the journey safe?”

I ask the merchant.

“The road to Vale has regular demon subjugation to maintain it.”

“Oh.”

“There is no real danger.”

Things start getting lighter, and the wagon raises speed a bit.

The wagon shakes with a rattling sound.

Is the wagon bad, or is the road bad? Probably both.

There is a forest of broad leafed trees on either side of the road.

The trees are not very high along the road, though I’m not sure about further into the forest.

However it doesn’t seem to be a very deep forest.

There is no scenery to enjoy because of the forest.

Scenery might take my mind off the shaking.

I endure the shaking in silence.

I eat the bread for breakfast while getting shaken around.

There is nothing to do, so I just stare forwards.

Well.

It's not bad to have free time.

But if I don't change my position every now & then my butt gets painful.

I see a shadow out front.

It seems to be something.

Slow Rabbit Lv1

"There's a slow rabbit ahead."

"You've seen them before?"

"I hunted some yesterday."

It's because of the judgement skill that I know it's a slow rabbit.

It's still quite far away though, so I can't see it well yet.

"I see it, it isn't very dangerous, but I'll slow down a bit."

"Hmmm."

The wagon approaches the slow rabbit, and then passes by it's side.

I want to attack it, but it's better to arrive at Vale quicker.

“We’ve passed it.”

As we move on, I see something else in the distance.

I’m not sure what it is yet at this distance.

Gumi slime Lv1

Do they normally have this many demons?

“It’s a Gumi slime.”

“A Gumi Slime?”

The merchant slows down the speed of the wagon.

“What’s wrong?”

“Gumi slimes attack when they see people, and they are hard to damage because of their soft bodies.”

“Is that so? No problem.”

It should be fine with my durandal.

“It’s the most formidable demon around here. It can melt your body with it’s slime. Villagers need to run if they see it.”

The merchant explains how fearsome the Gumi slime is.

Is it that dangerous?

It should be fine if I don’t make any mistakes since it’s Lv1.

I said there was no problem, so I should do it.

I’ll probably have to fight one sooner or later anyway.

“Don’t worry, keep going.”

I tell the merchant.

“Ok.”

The merchant doesn’t stop the wagon.

I open my character stats.

The two bonus points I thought I had were gone.

I’m not sure why, but the demon is priority now so I’ll think about it later.

I cancel the 30% bonus sale price, and put the points into weapons 6.

Also, the Hero job has a skill for things I can’t defeat with my durandal that I can try.

I confirm my settings.

Skill: Overwhelming!

I’m not sure of it’s effects.

“Overwhelming?”

An incantation appears in my head.

Should I recite this?

“What should I do.”

“It’s fine, just keep moving forward.”

“It’s straight ahead.”

The merchant does as I say, but I can see he's scared.

I take off the rucksack, and put it and the copper sword at my feet. I take the durandal out of it's sheath, and hang the sheath at my waist.

As the wagon approaches, the Gumi slime notices us, and moves towards us.

"Ok, stop."

"Ok!"

As the speed of the cart decreases, I jump down from my seat.

I run past the side of the horse to the front of the Gumi slime. I swing the durandal sideways towards the left. It tears right through the Gumi slime.

It seems I can't finish it in one blow.

"By the deliverance of ei…. urgh"

I tried to recite an incantation, but the Gumi slime jumped at me. I twisted my body in a hurry, and somehow managed to avoid it.

Seems it's nearly impossible to do an incantation while fighting.

The Gumi slime jumps again, but I dodge it well because I'm watching it's movements this time.

I swing the durandal down onto where the Gumi slime landed. I strike it from it's head to it's lower body… though I'm not sure if it's got a head. If I'm hit by it that will be the end of me.

The Gumi slime slops onto the ground. It becomes green smoke & starts to vanish.

When the green smoke is gone there is something white on the ground.

Slime starch.

I'm not quite sure what this dropped item is.

But I'll take it anyway.

To defeat a Gumi slime it seems I have to hit it with the durandal twice.

It's difficult to chant a skill during combat, my concentration isn't good enough. Maybe I should only use them for pre-emptive strikes?

How do I use a skill when I'm in a pinch?

I will need to train to do it.

As I'm thinking about the fight, the merchant brings the wagon up.

"You defeated it."

"Yes."

"…and in such a short time… amazing."

"I guess."

It's because of the durandal that it's two shots.

I don't know how many strikes it would take with the copper sword, and it's likely that I'd lose.

"Michio, are you a wizard?"

The merchant asks.

"Even if it looked like that, I used my sword."

"Yes, you used your sword the other day too."

I defeated the thief without magic.

But it would be useful.

“That’s right.”

I climb back onto the wagon.

Magic definitely exists in this world. My character stats indicate it.

I think wizards probably exist too, but I could be wrong.

“Is that a Slime starch?”

“Yes.”

“Do you want it? I could buy it from you as a reward for defending the wagon.”

I hurriedly pulled up my character stats.

I removed my points from weapons 6, and put them back into 30% selling bonus price.

I finished adjusting my stats, and then hid the durandal so the merchant couldn’t see it.

I hope he doesn’t think I’m strange.

“Thank you, that would be good.”

I pass the Slime starch to the merchant.

Was I quick enough?

“Slime starch can become alcohol. It ferments when you dissolve it in water. It’s called

Slime sake, and there are many people who like it.

“Oh.”

“The normal price is 80 nars, but I’ll increase that tenfold since you defended the wagon. I’ll give you 1040 nars for it.”

“Thank you very much, I’ll accept it.”。

Tenfold should have been 800, but it’s 1040.

The 30% selling bonus seems to be working.

The merchant gives me 10 silver coins, and 40 copper coins.

I put it in the drawstring bag, and then put the rucksack back over my shoulder.

“Are there wizards around here?”

I was curious, so I asked about it.

“I don’t know. To become a wizard you have to drink some special medicine from 5 years of age. Mostly only children of nobles and super wealthy families can become wizards. I have not heard of any around here.”

“I see.”

So there is that sort of restriction on becoming a wizard.

So I can’t become one?

Or….

It’s something I can think about later.

I start thinking about bonus points while getting bounced around by the wagon.

I thought my bonus points had increased, but they weren't there.

I've got 63 points in bonus sale price.

15 points in decreasing experience needed.

5 points in bonus experience.

That's 93 total.

3 points in my third job, so that's 96.

Judgement, job settings, and character reset brings it up to 99.

That's what I had in the beginning, so it hasn't increased.

It makes sense after I add it all up.

When my Villager level went up, I gained bonus points.

I've removed my Villager Lv3 job and replaced it with Farmer Lv1. This must be why my bonus points are the same as when I started.

To test it out, I switch my first job back to Villager Lv3.

When I do a character reset…..

There are 2 more bonus points.

Chapter 11 - Town of Vale

The wagon kept advancing as the question about bonus points was solved.
The woods parted suddenly and a castle wall can be seen ahead.

“Is that the town of vale?”
“Yes”
“It is very big.”

I think the length of one side of the walls might be one kilometer.
It can’t compare to a modern Japanese city, however given the cost to build the walls it would be quite a city.
There are fields outside the walls, probably maintained by residents of Vale.
I could not see them until the forest stopped.

The sun isn’t even halfway across the sky yet.
If I consider the time to hunt the Gumi slime along with the travel time, is it about 3 hours?
Probably, the length of one hour here is the same as one hour from earth.

“It is the best city around here.”

The merchant proudly speaks.
Several wagons had gathered in the surroundings of the city.
The merchants wagon passes by them as it approaches the city.

Even though there is a castle gate, there is no guard.
There doesn’t appear to be any inspections carried out either.

“Can you freely enter the town?”
“Of course, because of movement magic even the walls are not that high.”

Movement magic. Are there these kind of things?
If you can move with magic, I guess it would be pointless to have inspections at the gate.

Is that it?
Then what is the point of the castle walls?
If people can move around with magic, why did we come to Vale by wagon?のでは。

“Really?”

It’s strange, but there is probably a reason.
Is the castle wall to protect against demons?
We probably came by wagon because we can’t use movement magic.

The wagon entered into the town.

“First stop is the slave dealers, next is the knights headquarters, followed by the weapon and armor vendors. How does that sound to you?
“Good.”

The merchant tells me his plans while entering the town.

The wagon advanced into the town.
The road is wide, and paved with stone. The buildings on both sides are an amazing four stories high and covered with plaster.
It is a remarkable thing, especially for a civilization level that doesn’t even have a store.
There is plenty of people walking about, though I wouldn’t call it crowded.
It could be called a calm town.

I saw villagers, merchants, farmers, fighters, and swordsmen walking around.
I wonder if they all live in this city?

“The center of the city is just ahead, but we are heading to the right.”
“I understand.”

The wagon turns right onto another road.
“This area of town is a bit dangerous, don’t go onto the back roads.”
“I’ll be careful.”
There is a place that looks like it might be a brothel.

Shops to dazzle your senses.
There must be a demand on these things in this world.
The slums are nearby, are there gangs ruling these kinds of places in this world?

This needs to be investigated.
It's fine if I don't go there, but since I live in this world now it is important that I know what kind of danger there is.
If it is a place that is dangerous, I will have to learn about it.I should go for investigation.

I should investigate thoroughly. (TN: It's not clear, but he's still thinking about the brothel I think.)
It is investigation in a different world.
Even if you go to those kinds of places for investigation it is an excusable thing.

It is unavoidable if it's for investigation.
It's not right or wrong.

While thinking about it, the wagon turns right and then stops next to the second house along.
Is this the slave dealer? Red brick 3 stories. It looks like a common private house.

"Are you here for business?"

When the cart stops, A young man dashes out from in the house.
Merchant Lv3. Since his level is low he must still be an apprentice.

"I came to deliver a criminal who has been dropped to slave rank."

After hearing the words of the merchant, the man checks the cage.

"I accepted it, please enter the shop."

The merchant and I enter the shop.

"It will be better if I sell the slave."

I mention this to the merchant as we are lead to the back.
If it's me, there is a rise of 30 percent.

"Sure, please take this then."

The merchant passes me a letter.

“What’s this?”
“The letter of ownership from the village chief. ”

Was there such a thing?
I accept the letter as we are guided into a room.

I sit on a sofa, and after a short time a man comes out.

Alan: Male, 63 years old
Slave trader Lv44

Is there also a Slave trader job?
And this guy is the highest level I’ve seen so far, is he really skillful?
Or was the village i was in too far into the country to see many high level people?

“I am Alan, the master of this house.”
“I’m Michio.”
“I’m Bikka of the Somara village.”
“Please take a seat.”

After the greetings i sit down on the sofa.
The sofa is very comfortable .
He must be a rich person since he can afford slaves.

“The city seems to be quite busy today.”

The merchant began to talk.
It’s just a chat.

“Didn’t you know? A Maze was found two days ago.”
“Is it a labyrinth?”

Hmm. Is there a labyrinth?
Come to think of it , did I choose a setting where there is both fields and dungeons?
I devoted myself to silently collecting information.

“Didn’t you encounter demons near the town?”
“We encountered them twice, but it wasn’t that close to Vale.”
“It’s probably increasing the strength of other Labyrinths too.”
“Yes, we encountered a Gumi Slime today.”
“Wow, are you alright?”

The slave merchant asks with a worried look on his face.
奴隷商人が心配顔で問いかけてきた。

“Yes, Mishio here defeated it.”
“On his own?”
“Yes, Michio is also the person who helped the village against theives recently.”

I felt uncomfortable getting praised.
So i changed the topic.

“The man who tried to steal the thief’s equipment got his rank dropped to that of a slave in accordance with the rules of the village.”
“I understand.”
“This is the letter of ownership from the village chief.”
I take out the letter.
The Slave merchant accepts the letter.

“I’ll look it over.”
“We will hand over half of the sale price to Michio.”

The merchant Bikka explains to the slave trader while he reads the letter.

“I see.”
“How is it?”
“Everything is in order. The man has a healthy body and is in the prime of life, I think that about 30,000 nars should be the market price.”

I watched the merchant.
I don’t understand the market price.
The merchant nods slightly.

“I see. That will be fine.”
“Thank you.”
“Please pay half to me and the other half to Michio.”

The 30% bonus did not seem to work.
When it is a slave, maybe it does not work?

“Is this your first time here?”

The slave trader asks me.

“This is the first time I’ve been to this town.”
“Is that so. Are you an adventurer?”

It might happen.
Does my face look like that of an adventurer?
Or maybe adventurers wander around villages handling thieves?

“No, I’m not part of a guild either.”
“Then, are you thinking of buying a slave in future?”

Wait. What did you say?

“A slave… Buy… You can buy an adventurer?”

I worked out the story somehow.

“Yes, there are quite a few.”

I could buy a slave.
I didn’t even consider it for some reason.
Am I being influenced by my modern day Japanese common sense too much?

There are slaves in this world.
Because I sold a slave, I should be able to buy a slave.

If I buy a female slave, what kind of things can I ask her to do?
If I buy a female slave, will she…
If I buy a female slave…

“Really? It hasn’t been long since I’ve left my teacher, I was training in the mountains before this so I’m a bit ignorant on how things work.”

I use an excuse I was thinking about.
If I say I’m from the country and was training in the mountains then it’s a good excuse for why I don’t know things, and why I am so strong.
Though the truth is I’m strong because of durandal.

“I see. You do look quite young, are you thinking of going to the Labyrinth near town?”
“Maybe, that might be good.”

If there is dungeon, you go in.
If there is a hole, you stick it in. That’s what it means to be a man.

“In that case, let’s talk about it again another time.”
“Sure, I’ll come by again.”

I’ve heard something good.

The slave dealer goes out of a room briefly, and returns with money.

“Here’s 15,000 nars, its half of the money.”
“Thank you.”

The merchant receives his half first.
One gold coin and a lot of silver coins. Is 10,000 nars a gold coin?

“I look forward to future’s dealings with you, your half is 19,500 nars.”

The slave trader offers me the second plate of money.
One gold coin, and an amazing amount of silver coins.
Am I the only one that receives the 30% bonus?

I watch the merchant of the village for an instant, but seem to think nothing at all in particular.
About having been said that I bought a slave about the 30% up.

“Thank you.”

Being able to buy a slave shocks me a bit.

How do I buy a slave?
Isn't it a crime to buy a slave?
No, that's just modern Japanese ethics.
I need to use this worlds ethics here.
I came to sell a slave because of the rules of the village, but now that I've done that I guess it wouldn't be that strange if I bought one.

Though it feels strange to sell people as slaves.
It makes me feel a bit depressed.

Now I'm feeling bad, so I might try and run away.

"Well Michio, I look forward to seeing you again."

He seems to have remembered my name.
I guess it's not possible to run away.

Maybe that's good. I should come again.
I want to hear about the labyrinth.

The merchant and I leave the slave traders house.
After the merchant makes a U-turn in the wagon, I get in too.

After heading back the way we came a bit we then start heading towards the city center.

"Is that a market?"

There were stalls set up along both sides of the road.
Food and clothing on display, with people gathering around.

Soldier Lv41

Swordsman Lv47

Shinto priest Lv35

Cook Lv28

There's a lot of good jobs.
The people also seem to be of quite a high level.

Adventurer Lv13

There really is a job named adventurer too.

That building is the headquarters of the knight group.

As we head towards the middle of the city the merchant points to it.
Is it the center of the town? There is a large open plaza with a large brick bell tower building to the left.

The wagon stops in front of the that building.
"××××××××××"
"××××××××××"

A knight comes out of the building and speaks to the merchant about something.

Knight Lv4

His level is low.
I guess he's still an apprentice.

"Michio, show him the thief's intelligence card."

The merchant spoke.

"Okay."

Oh, I see.
I didn't know why we came here.
I can get reward money for the thief.

I take down a rucksack and open a drawstring purse bag and take the card out of the inside.
I handed it to the apprentice knight.

The merchant also hands two over, I assume from the thieves the villagers defeated.

I looked at the thief's intelligence card, but nothing was written on it.
Can he get information from it?

"I will confirm the intelligence cards."
"Yes, please do."

The merchant stretches out an arm towards the Lv4 Knight.
The back of his hand is near the Knight's face.

"Intentions of the soul, breath of wisdom, intelligence card, open!"

So the intelligence cards that need to be confirmed are ours?

Dangerous.
Will you confirm mine?

Do I really have an intelligence card?
If i don't, what happens?

The knight finishes confirming the card of the merchant.
The merchant lowers his arm. The knight watches me next.

Oh, I have no choice but to try.

There didn't seem to be a choice, so I held out my left hand.
I raised it in front of the knights face.

"Is this fine?"
"Intentions of the soul, breath of wisdom, intelligence card, open!"

An intelligence card came out from the back of my hand, despite me feeling anxious about it.
Now I'm anxious because it came out.
What will happen.

"…How is it?"

I'm worried because the knight is silent, so I ask about it.
The silence is scary.

"…You have a family name?…Odd. Your a free man. That's fine."

I seem to pass.
The knight went into the building.

I try to look at my intelligence card.

Kaga Michio: Male 17 years old, Villager, free man.

It was written as kanji with Arabic numerals.
It's probably unusual in this world to have a family name.
I seem to be a free man.
There are slaves, and there are free men, are there also nobles?

"What did he check?"
"Whether your job is a thief or not. If it was a thief I cannot hand over the reward. "

When the merchant responds, I freeze up for a second.
I have the job of thief.

My job written on the intelligence card is Villager it seems.
Is the first job shown as the main job?
Villager is good as the first job.

"Oh."

I breathe out lightly.
It seems the intelligence card can't be separated from the hand, even if pulled. After pushing it slightly, it disappeared back into my hand.
I wonder how it works.

"The thief's card is being checked inside. We'll know the result straight away."
"How did we get the cards from the thieves?"
"Thirty minutes after a person dies, it comes out naturally."

The merchant explains it.
You can't take an intelligence card from someone still living.

One woman came out before long from the headquarters.

Radia Maxi Nantes Gozzeru: Female, 28 years old.
Knight Lv27
Equipment: Magical armor, Boots of acceleration.

Her level isn't high, but she has equipment I haven't seen before, and her name is complicated.
She is probably from a noble family.
She is beautiful with a well defined body. Her chest is not that big though.
She has blonde hair, tied together at the back.

" Are you the one who defeated the thief?"

She looks at me with curious eyes.

"Yes"
"They are from the band of thieves that control the slums in this town. Some of them probably went out to plunder from villages. We are preparing bounty money for you. The other thieves did not have a bounty yet."

The Knight looked towards the merchant for an instant.

"I understand."

The two cards that the merchant gave them must have been useless.

The Lv4 Knight comes out of the headquarters.
He passes a white bag to the female knight.

"Here is the bounty money."

She tosses me the bag.

"Wow."

I quickly grabbed it.

“You should leave here quickly.”

The female Knight finishes speaking, then hurries back into the headquarters.

Oh?
Is that all that happens?

It’s a pity, since she is beautiful I should have at least given her my name.

“Thank you very much.”

A merchant says, and we start to leave with the wagon.

Is this really all that happens?
Blunt.
Even though this is the knights headquarters, there is no discussion about the attack on the village?

No. I understand it.
I really understand it.
A person with an appearance like mine can only get this far when speaking to a beautiful woman.

A guy who is not popular on earth will not be popular here either.
Why would I be popular here when I wasn’t on earth?
There is no reason.

“Is the weapon shop next?”

I check with the merchant in a tired voice.
Haa.

“Yes.”

The merchant guides the wagon forwards.

I put the bounty money into the rucksack. Did the 30% bonus work?
Maybe not, because it’s a bounty?
I’m not sure.

Getting a 30% bonus.

That would have been nice.

After we travel for a while, a shop with a sword comes into view.
Is this the weapon shop?
Two handed sword.
Skill: Double intellect, Flame sword, Purification.
An amazing large sword is the centerpiece of the store.
It has three skills. It must be quite good.

The wagon stops, so I get out.
A man comes over.

Weapon merchant Lv21

Is there a weapon merchant job too?

“Greetings.”
“Welcome, what can I do for you?”
“I want to sell swords.”

I show the weapon merchant the swords in the wagon.

“Soul of the weapon, unleash the power, weapon judgment!”

The weapons merchant looks at the copper sword while muttering.

Wow.
I’m quite shocked.
I’m surprised because an intelligence card came out.

It looks like there is a skill for weapon appraisal.
Though my judgement skill doesn’t use an incantation, and it’s really good.

“How is it?”
“18 copper swords, they are 250 nars each.”

The merchant nods lightly.
Two of the eighteen shares belong to the villagers.

“Ok. ”
“One iron sword, the price is 1000 nars.”
“Yea.”
“After that……”

The weapon merchant picks up the Flame Rapier.

“How is it?”
“A weapon with a skill, Flame Rapier. I will buy it for 18,000 nars.”

As expected of a weapon with a skill, the price is higher.
The merchant looks a bit surprised, but nods.

“I see.”
“The price of the Scimitar is 500 nars.”

The arms dealer says after only a quick look at the Scimitar.

“Does that price consider the empty skill slots?”
“I don’t know what you mean, you can’t put a skill on this sword.”

The weapons merchant seems annoyed at my request.
Doesn’t he understand the empty slots?

“Ok, so there is no skill. How much is this one?”

I show the weapon merchant the copper sword that I keep at my waist.
“Soul of the weapon, unleash the power, weapon judgment! It’s just a plain copper sword, 250 nars is the market price.”

He put emphasis on “plain”.

There is an empty slot in my copper sword.
Maybe he really doesn’t understand empty slots?
Anyway, it’s apparent that it isn’t reflected by the price.

“I understand. I will keep the Scimitar. I would like to sell the other swords.”
“Thank you very much. You brought a large quantity. I’d like to buy the lot for 30,550 nars.”

So is it 30% bonus?
I don't really know if it works.

"That will be fine."
"Certainly. Just a moment."

The weapons dealer goes inside, then returns with a plate of coins."
Three gold coins, Five silver coins, and a large amount of copper coins.
Is 10,000 nars a gold coin after all?
Because it is troublesome I take the copper coins without counting them.

"Thank you for this."
"Thank you."

I put one gold coin, and all the smaller coins into my drawstring bag.
I offer two gold coins to the merchant.

"Is this all right for the villages share?"
"This is quite a bit."

Two copper swords, the Flame Rapier, and the Scimitar come to 19,000 nars.

"I like the Scimitar, so I've paid highly for it."
"Thank you, you are very kind."

The merchant said nothing about the sale price having improved 30%.
He gets the right amount.
The skill is mine.

Next we go to the armor shop.

"The thieves the villagers defeated didn't have any protective items, so after you unload your stuff at the armor shop we will part ways.
"Is it so? Thank you for taking care of me."
"No. It is you who have taken care of us, thank you again for saving our village."

I'm still sad Tirihi didn't come along.
After unloading my stuff near the armor shop, the merchant leaves in the wagon.

The centerpiece of this shop is the same armor the beautiful female knight was wearing earlier.

Body equipment: Magical armor.
Skill: Magic damage reduction.

It seems to be a good protective item with a skill.

I set aside a set of Leather armor & Leather shoes that look good.
Then I called for a merchant.

"Excuse me?"
"Hello. Can I help you?"

Armor merchant Lv33

Weapons, and Armor merchants seem to be a different jobs.
So armor and weapons shops are all separate?

"I want you to buy these."
"Soul of the armor, unleash the defense, armor judgement!

The armor merchant looks at the equipment.
I feel a little shy.

Are weapon appraisal and armor appraisal different skills?
A weapons merchant can use only weapon appraisal, and an armor merchant can use only armor appraisal.

"How is it?"
"The Thief's bandana is 500 nars, Iron armor is 1,800 nars, Leather armors are 200 nars, and leather shoes are 20 nars."
"I see."

I do not understand the market price, so I just nod at the prices said.

The bandana of the thief was not high as expected.
Is 500 nars a sum of money someone would risk becoming a slave for?

“There are two leather armors, and seven leather boots. I’ll offer 3,692 nars for the lot.”
“Thank you.”

Maybe I’ll get the 30% bonus.
I accept the price offered.

The armor merchant brings the money.

I have a lot of small change now.

Chapter 12 - Roxanne

I've finished everything I needed to do in Vale.
Now I feel free.
I also feel a bit lost now that I have nothing to do.

It's good having something to do, though doing nothing for a while probably isn't bad.

I have left the merchant, and now I don't know anyone.
When I think of that I suddenly feel lonely.

Nobody knows me in this world.
I am alone.

I'm worried.
I feel uneasy about it.

Wait, was there one person?
A slave trader. He is probably waiting.
Though I don't especially want him to wait.

I should do some information gathering.
That is necessary before entering a labyrinth.

I have leather armor, and leather shoes. I hide in the shade of a nearby building.
I put the leather armor over the top of my cloths, and place the leather shoes into my rucksack.
The copper sword and scimitar are both hanging at my waist. I feel like a samurai.

I check to make sure nobody can see me, and then open the bag with my reward money.
There are 16 gold coins, and a large number of silver coins.

Is this 160,000 nars?
Also, I have too many silver coins.
I find the currency in this world inconvenient, going up every 100 coins when I'm used to having 5 & 10 yen coins.

The reward the village chief gave me was 15 gold coins.
I don't understand the value, but is it a similar amount to the bounty?

I now have 33 gold coins, a lot of silver, and a lot of copper.
I put just the gold coins back into the drawstring bag.

I close the rucksack, and hang it over my shoulder.
I head back out onto the road.

There are a lot of people bustling about.
I even see races that are not human.

There is a beast man, I child with a tail, and a woman with pointed ears.
Oh, she's an elf.
I look around secretly while pretending to examine a product because I didn't want to stare too much.

Jerika Hatoma: 37 year old female swordsman Lv46

Checking status shows ♂ & ♀ for men & women. (TN: I'm just going to type male/female).
She has an extremely beautiful face, and her chest is beautiful too. Even though her age is 37 she still looks to be in her 20's.

The merchant who owns the shop I'm at comes out.
I run away before I'm caught.

There are a lot of humans, but other races are becoming familiar and seem to fit in well.
As expected of another world.

I walked around looking at things in the city.
I want to check out market prices, but they don't put price tags on things.
I tried listening to conversations between the merchants and customers, but I could not understand the language.
The fruit that looked like a carrot is being sold, but I don't understand the price.

I make my way through the city to the slave dealers place.

“Hello?”
“Oh, the guy from earlier.”

The young man who appears to be an apprentice comes out.

“I’d like to meet with Alan.”
“Ok, could you wait inside for a minute?”

I enter the building, and am guided to a room near the entrance.
The reception is different from last time.
Maybe service differs in the case of sales?

A carpet is spread in the room, an expensive looking picture is on the wall.
There is no couch, but instead there is a high quality looking chair & table.
It feels like a waiting room for a good customer.

“Michio, thanks for waiting.”

The slave dealer came straight away.
I hadn’t even sat down yet.

“Umm.”
“Please come with me.”

The slave dealer guides me.
He leads me to the same room as last time.

“Where is the labyrinth you were telling me about?”

Before getting to business with the slave dealer, I chat about something I wanted to know.

“Just in the forest to the west of town.”
“The west should be the opposite side to where I came from.”

Since I came to town with the sun behind me, I should have entered Vale from the east.
I sit on the couch, and an employee brings a drink to the slave dealer and me.
Is it an employee? Or maybe a maid?

Roxanne: 16 year old female. Beast soldier Lv6

She is wearing a white apron over a dark blue dress.
It's maid cloths. There seems to be maids in this world.

The face,

…

She's beautiful.
She's a stunningly beautiful woman.

Even idols are not this beautiful.
This is great, the beauty of women in this world is above earth.

Enchanting reddish brown eyes, magnificent lips, thick chestnut brown hair. She is wearing a triangular white hat.

"Here you are."

The beauty puts a cup in front of me.
Her chest bounces as she places it.
Too amazing.

“Thank you.”

I answer plainly.

There seems to be a lot of comfortable loose fitting cloths in this world. The size of a woman’s chest isn’t easy to figure out.
The apron and maid cloths here are loose also.

However, it bounces.
It definitely bounces.
My eyes watched the jiggle of the breasts.
The volume must be considerable with this much bouncing.

“The entrance to it was only found two days ago, so it will still be a while before it’s cleared.”
“Oh.”

I’m not listening to the slave dealer.
It’s because of the breasts on the beautiful woman.

Her height is similar to mine, maybe a little over 160cm?
The cloths don’t expose much, but judging by the face & hands she doesn’t have any extra weight.
But, that bouncing…

Roxanne is a race that is not human.
I can’t see her ears because of her hat & hair.

Roxanne puts a cup in front of the slave dealer.

“Please drink.”
“Thank you.”

I look to the cup now.

At the slave traders suggestion, I pick up the cup.
I think it's something like a herbal tea.
I put it slowly to my mouth.

Roxanne bows and leaves the room.

"You seem to like it."
"Eh…"

I nearly spit back into the cup.

"It's a great thing."
"…Um, the drink is good."
"I mean the girl."

Oh, is that it?

"Her?"
"It's the slave I recommend the most."

Yes.
This is how it is.
The slave dealer won't use a regular employee with a customer in a business meeting.

So that's how it is?
Roxanne is a slave?

"…So, it's fine for an adventurer to buy a slave?"

The conversation was a trick.
I can buy Roxanne.
Such a beautiful woman.

"Yes, where should I explain it from? Maybe you are interested in starting a party Michio?"
"Ah, yes."

I hadn't thought about it, but I answer naturally.
Can this beautiful woman be bought?

The blood is rushing to my head.
Is my face red now?
Oh no. Calm down.

Even though it's a slave, it's not free.

"If you start a party, you can hunt more efficiently. Though some people solo, or work in a group, it's best to make a group of six people."
"Is that so?"

So a party consists of six people.

Though if we are together for 24 hours.
It would be better to share a bed.
Sleeping with Roxanne….

"However, there is a problem with six people. You can make a fortune in a Labyrinth. What happens with dividing it? If a white gold coin drops. Or if a demon drops a valuable item?"

Is there a white gold coin as well as a gold coin?
If such a thing appeared, naturally I would buy Roxanne.
Though if there is a valuable item, a guy who wants it always appears.

"Then we have problems?"
"If it's valuable, criminals will also appear."
"Indeed."

I can buy that beautiful Roxanne.

This is bad.
My head is full of it.

She is such a beautiful woman.
I haven't seen anyone so beautiful before.
If I buy her, then she will be mine. My heart is going crazy.

"Needless to say, party members should be people you trust greatly.
Though in your case, if there is a great difference in ability then some

problems can be prevented. However in many cases problems will still occur in a party."

I try to push thoughts of Roxanne to the corner of my head.

Even if trouble happens in parties in a game, it doesn't become a serious matter.
Byt that's a game character. It's possible that the system will handle things in a net game between human players.

But what about reality?
Party members are other people after all. You have to meet them, and go into a Labyrinth together. And what happens if you throw valuable loot in after that.

"Someone might stab you in the back in the Labyrinth?"
"It's possible."

So that's how it is.
Should I buy Roxanne?

"I see."
"But if the party members are slaves, then all the items belong to the master."

If it's a slave, there isn't problems.
The slave is mine. Mine is mine.
I want to make Roxanne mine.

"What is a slave stabs you in the back?"
"That doesn't happen. If the owner dies, the slave follows the owner to the grave."
"They… They die?"

If Roxanne is bought by someone and they die, Roxanne dies?

"Well, you can make a will for your slaves too and select someone to inherit them, and some people choose to set them free if they have worked well."
"I see."

If I die, I would free Roxanne.

“But there isn’t any time to prepare a will if you get killed in a Labyrinth, so you shouldn’t need to worry about being attacked by a slave.”
“If they can’t kill you, can they just run away?”
“They could, but their chances of having a better life after running away are quite slim. Since they are slaves, their masters are obligated to provide food and a place to sleep, so their lives are well taken care of.

I want to provide food and a place to sleep to Roxanne.
Especially a place to sleep.

Oops.
My mind is wandering again.

“What about if they run away with a valuable treasure?”
“The fugitive slave becomes a thief. It’s a crime to kill a slave, but it is not to kill a thief. They would have to prepare considerably well to avoid at least getting a beating.”

And this guy will kindly buy your thief.
So thief is lower ranked than slave.
They are below Roxanne.

“So the possibility of running away is small?”
“Yes, so a lot of adventurers like to buy slaves.
“I understand.”

If a party doesn’t have similar interests, it can become a problem.
I’m just one person from earth. I don’t know the common sense of this world, so it might be difficult to find companions.

Will my life become just me shut in alone in a dungeon.
I’ll be a solo player forever if I don’t buy Roxanne.

No, I guess it doesn’t need to be Roxanne.
But it should be a beautiful woman.

“She is a beast soldier, and you will find her useful as a party member straight away.”

The slave dealer recommends Roxanne.

“Beast soldier….”
“You don’t know? She is a wolf person, and beast soldier is a job only those from the wolf family can take.”
“Oh.”

Judgement just shows Roxanne as female.

“You’ve never bought a slave?”
“No.”
“She is a beautiful woman, and one of the best I’m selling at the moment. She’s quite smart, and should make an ideal slave for a first time customer. Also, being a beast soldier from the wolf people is the main reason I can recommend her to you.”

The slave dealer is pushing for a sale.

There must be some downsides.
I should try not to get carried along by the business talk.

No. Roxanne is amazing.
Her arrow has already struck my heart.

“Why are the wolf people recommended?”
“Have you heard that elves have long lives?”
“Yes.”

It’s a common story.
So it’s the same in this world?

“It’s just a myth.”
“What?”
“Elves, humans, and beast people all have similar life spans, and intellect, but the reason people think the elves have long lives is because all of them look youthful.”
“I see.”

The elf woman I saw in town looked to be in her 20’s, yet judgement told me she was 37.

Roxanne is a beautiful woman, but the elf was beautiful too.
But Roxanne has a bigger chest.

“For a person of another race, it is harder to distinguish aging. For example, if you see a two year old dog, and an eight year old dog, you won’t see much difference.”
“Right.”
“At 60-70, beast people age so that even humans can notice, but they still look quite youthful into their 50’s. A girl from the wolf people would look young almost forever.”
“Really.”

So Roxanne will always look young?
Roxanne is a year younger than me.
Will a 51 year old me look young to a 50 year old Roxanne?

“There is another thing about other races that you may think is an advantage.”
“Oh?”
“You can’t have a child with females from another race.”
“Oh….”

Does that mean I can do whatever I want?
Is there a Kondo Musashi in this world? (TN: Dojinshi writer, I saw yaoi & stopped looking, but I assume he has beast people dojinshi as well by context.)
So Roxanne… would not get pregnant?

“Needless to say, she is a virgin.”

Is that so?
Roxanne.

“Is a virgin’s price different?”
“There is no worry about illness if she is a virgin. There is a brothel in this town, but I don’t recommend going there.”

So I shouldn’t consider it.
Is there STD’s in this world?
I guess there is no antibiotics.
I must keep investigating.

“I see.”
“Also, she is a slave that consented to becoming a sex slave.”
“Wha!”

Roxanne as a sex slave…

“She has agreed to attending to her owners nightly needs.”
“…woah.”

So it’s like that.
My imagination runs off with images of Roxanne.
I don’t need to endure it.

“Though all young female slaves are like that.”
“I see.”

Even in this world, if you buy a young female slave the purpose is the same.
Buying a slave for sex.
“I’m not sure how it will go for a person like you though.”
“Why?”
“Putting your hands on a slave can have an effect on your mind.”

If I have sex with Roxanne, even if there is no resistance, she is a slave.
It would be like doing it by force with money.

“I see.”
“A young person getting a slave for the first time is always like that. And some slaves might try to take advantage of them, like act suggestively and then not permit you to touch their bodies. But a female who has consented to be a sex slave from the beginning isn’t like that.”
“Oh.”
“Last of all, she can speak the Brahim language.”
“Oh.”

I think all my questions have been answered.
I saw the bouncing and jiggling.
It was great. I’d really like to see it again.

“These are all the reasons why I recommend her to you.”

The business talk with the slave dealer ends.

Chapter 13 - Vale Pavilion

“I might not be able to prepare the money.”

I follow the slave dealer down the stairs.

“I don’t think that will happen. I heard you defeated a thief, so you probably had an income of 2-300,000 nars in just a couple of days.”

The slave dealer seems to be estimating my finances quite accurately.
Does he estimate that I have near 420,000 nars?
I can’t disagree with the asking price, I have no choice but to go along with it.

But there are things the slave dealer doesn’t know.
He doesn’t know I had 0 nars a few days ago.

“Including that money, it’s still not enough.”
“Surely that’s not the case.”

Where does his confidence come from?

I followed the slave dealer, and we arrived at the room from earlier.

The methods for me to earn money in this world, at the moment there are two.

One is to go into the dungeon.
If one dropped item sells for 100 nars, and I collect 100 a day then that’s one gold coin. By the tenth day it will become 100,000 nars.
Is that too hard?

Rabbit’s furs were 20 nars each, so 100 nars might be too optimistic.
I don’t know if you can hunt 100 of them in a day either. I don’t know if 100 demons will drop 100 items either.
The demons I hunted previously all dropped one item, but that might not always be the case.
If I fight a strong demon, it’s dropped items might be more scarce.

The other way is getting bounty money from killing thieves.
The bounty from two thieves is 160,000.
Is that where the slave traders confidence comes from?

There is some mental resistance to that though.
When I fought in the village I thought it was a game, and it was self-defense.
I don't know if I can kill a person for money.
Also, I might not find one in ten days.

Using my knowledge from earth, I can't think of any other ways to get the money in time.
I might think of something, but it will be hard to do in ten days.

"Can I make money if I go into the labyrinth?"

I sit on the sofa and ask the slave dealer about it.
It is necessary to gather more information.

"Not much, but it's steady income, and you might get lucky in there too."
"I see."

So that's how it is.
If it's not much, is it too hard to make the money based on regular drops?

"The items can be sold at the explorer, and adventurer guilds. If there is someone looking for them specifically the price might be higher."
"Ah, the guilds."
"The explorer guild is on the main street, it's near the yellow signboards. The adventurers guild is in the west side of the town, and it has bad relations with the explorers guild."

So the explorers guild and adventurers guild don't get along with each other.
There is an explorer job as well?

"I see."
"You could also aim for some bounty money."

The slave dealers ideas seem to resemble my own.

“I see.”
“I don’t recommend it, but it can be quite profitable.”
“You don’t recommend it?”
“Well, only the capital city has a bounty hunters guild.”
“Bounty hunter…”

That job exists?
I open my job stats.
I got the thief job from stealing, the farmer job from some farm work, how about when I claimed the bounty?
It was an idea, but it’s not there.

“You have to get a lot of experience as a soldier to become a bounty hunter.”
“Is that so.”

Maybe that’s a requirement to acquire the job?
Soldier Lv10

“Bounty hunters are quite strong, but not good on defense. If they build a guild somewhere outside the capital, it would probably be destroyed straight away.”

From a thief’s point of view, a bounty hunter is probably a hated enemy.
There might be problems forming parties with them.
Would they attack me?
Or am I safe since I killed a thief?

“If you get too much bounty money, will you be attacked?”

There doesn’t seem to be any social problem with killing thieves.
People that kill, get killed.
It seems to be a rule in this world.

“That does happen, and if a person who is killed by a thief doesn’t have any relatives then the bounty money might not be very high.”

So was the reward for the thief I killed in the village higher than normal?
No. The slave dealer estimated it exactly.

Well, killing thieves will be a last resort.
First I will try making money in the labyrinth.

“I see. I plan to stay in this town for a while, can you recommend a hotel somewhere? An expensive place would be a problem, but it should at least be a place I can sleep without having to worry about my safety.”
“The vale pavilion in the southwest side of town center is an inn that is run by the hotel guild.”
“Thank you, I will go there.”

The hotel guild. I find that hard to believe, but if a guild is running it then it should be safe.
I stand up.
Everything has been decided and my business here is done for now.

“Then, we shall wait for ten days.”

The slave dealer sees me off as I depart the building.

The sun is still high in the sky.
The roads in this town head north, south, east & west. I start off to the west.
I think it’s a bit after noon.

First of all, I head back to the main street.
I head down the street and find the explorers guild.

Explorer Lv17

Yes, there is definitely an explorer job.

The guild has a counter inside it, and feels similar to a country post office.
There are signs pasted on the wall at the road side.
There are several people inside, and I see one placing a load on the counter.

“Someone ordered this.”
“I will pay for it.”

The employee handles the business over the counter.
I stand at one of the signs while straining my ears to listen.

…I can't read the characters.

I can't understand what is written here.
The intelligence card had Japanese characters, but the characters here are different.
Is the explorers guild special? Is the intelligence card special?

"You can't read it?"

Someone speaks to me.
It's a girl about the same age as me.
She is a villager Lv2.

"Ah."
"I can read. 10 nars for six minutes."

I see.
This world has a low literacy rate so this happens.
She's reading to make money.

"Please do it."

I put down the rucksack, and take ten copper coins from the drawstring bag.
I don't understand the value of ten nars.
The 30% discount doesn't seem to work.
It might be a high price because it's to someone who can read.

"Here."

The employee inside passes the customer some money.
I don't know what is being sold, or it's value, but they seem to be being quite careful with the money.
Maybe they fear being targeted if they pass around a lot of money.

I passed ten nars to the girl.
She has a cute face, but her breasts are hard to make out with the way her cloths hang.
There is no way they are better than Roxanne's.

“I’ll read until this clock stops.”

She pulls an hourglass from her belt, and flips it.
It seems to be quite precise.

Though I wouldn’t be surprised if it was just five minutes.
If there is a difference, even if I complain I won’t get my time back.

“I see.”
“What information would you like to know, or do you have something you are interested in selling?”

She is prepared.
Even if she asks what I’d like to know, I don’t understand what sort of information is on this board anyway.

“Is there anything about Rabbit’s fur?”
“Rabbit’s fur.”

She reaches out, and starts running her arm along the signs.

“There is?”
“This. Bikka from Somara village is selling two of them.”

She points.
Bikka from Somara village is the merchant I know.
The village chief told me to sell my rabbit furs to him.
The sign is up here to advertise and sell them highly.

The other characters probably say where to find him.

“It doesn’t say the price?”
“The price is double what the guild would pay.”

Is that so?
The advertising price of the guild seems to be a tenth of the cost.
Making money from drops seems to be quite difficult.

“Is there any Rabbit’s meat?”
“I think restaurants will buy it. Are you asking about large quantities?”
“Yes.”

I see.
Ingredients can be sold to a restaurant.

“There doesn’t appear to be any places with a request up for Rabbit’s meat.”

She gives the whole board a quick look.
It’s about three quarters full.
I wonder if there’s much aside from purchase requests?

“What information is on the board aside from purchase requests?”
“Explorers job offers, and information about the Labyrinth. It appeared near the town two days ago. People should be cautious of it.”

The slave trader said it was difficult for people who don’t know each other to form a party, but it does seem to be happening.
The conditions might not be good though.

“What kind of job offers are there?”
“What are you interested in?”
“Just start reading at the beginning.”

It’s hard to work out.
Isn’t it just party recruitment?

“Here’s one. The knights group needs help with transportation. It’s 800 nars after 10 days.”
“I see.”

So 80 nars a day.
From her tone of voice, it doesn’t sound like good work.

“The soldier corps has 10 days transportation work for 1,200 nars, but meals are not included.”
“Is that so.”

So this one has higher pay, but no meals.
Could food expenses be 400 nars for 10 days? 40 nars per day?

Since it specifically mentions that meals are not included, maybe that means they are normally included with work in this world.
Would the knight group work involve going to a military outpost?
Were the meals for that included?

I compare the two posters.
The same handwriting is used for both the posters about transportation.

As I think about it, six minutes have passed.

“The time is up. How was it? Good enough?”

The sand in the hourglass has completely passed to the bottom.

“Thank you, it was good reference.”
“Ok, see you later.”

She waves, and I leave the guild.
I’m not sure if reading for people is a common business. I wonder if I should learn to read for myself?

I head towards the center of town.
I head to the opposite side of where the knights headquarters is, to the southwest.
Is that the building?

The cost of lodging in the center of town might be quite high.
It’s probably safer though.
I have 33 gold coins at the moment, so I don’t want to stay somewhere shady.

I go into the inn.

It looks neat, but not really high class.
Is the lobby a restaurant? It has a lot of tables and chairs, but there are no people sitting down.
Maybe it isn’t the right time for customers? This world has no lunch.

“Please come in.”

As I head towards the counter, I hear a voice from inside.

Hotel Lv28

There seems to be a job named Hotel.
A man in his thirties comes out. He is wearing rough looking cloths similar to mine.

This definitely is not a high class hotel.
It should be a good price.

“Is it possible to stay for a long period of time?”
“Are you going to enter the Labyrinth?”
“Yes.”

Since the Labyrinth was found, the amount of guests here has probably increased.
It might have become a busy season.
Are there still rooms vacant?

“Is a single room good, or would you like to share a group room?”
“A single room.”

They have a shared group room?
That was common cheap housing in the Edo period.
There might be this kind of thing if you think about the cultural level.
For safety I do not want a shared room with other guests.

“What grade of room would you like?”
“Regular please. An expensive one would be a problem.”
“Would you like dinner included? You can get it separately, but there is a discount if it’s included.”
“How much is it?”
“60 nars. If you order it separately it’s 80-100 nars. You could also search around for a cheap place for dinner.”

When I thought 40 nars would be the food cost after considering the knights job, this seems slightly high.

Meals will be all sorts of prices, so maybe because it's so high it's good?
Since I came from Japan, the meals here have been hard to endure.
It might be difficult to look for a cheap meal, and it will be convenient if I can eat when I come back to the hotel.

"I'll include dinner."
"This is the Pavilion Inn of the hotel guild. I will check your intelligence card to see if it's good."
"I don't mind."

Is the check to prevent strange guests from coming here?
That's convenient.

"Ok."
"Are the only ones who can't stay here thieves?"
"What else would there be?"
"Oh, I was just curious."

Even slaves and nobles seem to be okay.

"Ah. There's also bandits and pirates. I've heard of a thief who did a number of vicious things and became a villain too, but I've never seen one."
"I see."

So thief also has a higher job type?

"The cheapest room is 260 nars, and dinner is 60 nars, so your charge is 224 nars per night. That has to be paid in advance, and you are also allowed to keep the room for the whole day."

260 plus 60 is 320, but I'm being charged 224?
My 30% discount works here.

"I understand."

I put down my rucksack, and pull out the drawstring bag.

"Please have your meal in the dining room near the entrance. Breakfast is also included in the room fee, and it is served 30 minutes after sunrise. Dinner is served from early evening until 30 minutes after sunset. There

won't be any food if it's too late, and the light in the dining room goes out two hours after sunset."
"Ok."

I place 4 silver coins and 48 copper coins on the counter.
I should be stingy, but I'll pay for a couple of days.
I want to decrease the amount of copper coins I have.
There's also the chance I might lose the drawstring bag, so it's safe to have at least one extra day paid up.

The hotel man counts the coins.

"You've given me two days wort, please show me one of your arms."
"Here."
"Intentions of the soul, breath of wisdom, intelligence card, open!"

My left arm is raised in front of him.
I should let him fill out the inn register.

"Is it alright?"
"Yes. Michio Kaga."

It should say Kaga Michio on the intelligence card. Did he realize that the first part is my family name?

"That's right."
"I'll guide you to your room."

He leaves the counter.
He doesn't take my bag for me.

"Ah."

I follow him.
We climb two sets of stairs. Looks like my room is on the third floor.

"If your going to the Labyrinth, we can buy some ingredients from you. It might be troubling if it's alot, but a reasonable amount can be put on the menu."
"Ok."

“If you wish for hot water to wipe your body, please request it when you return. Hot water is 20 nars, it will be brought to your room after dinner, and collected in the morning. We can loan you a lantern with an hour of oil for 10 nars. You may add more oil yourself, but please do not start a fire.”
“I’ll be careful.”

We arrived while I listened to the details.
He opens the door with a key.

“We are here.”
“Thank you.”

The room is rectangular, and about ten tatami mats in size.
There’s a desk and a chair, a bed with a closet next to it, and a wooden window near the chair. [TN Maybe wooden shutters on a window, no glass?]
It’s a good room.

What was that room at the village chiefs house?
Well, that was free.

“The closet is locked and can be used for valuables. Please look after valuables yourself carefully. Employees clean once a day around noon. If you need washing done, please ask an employee. Please leave your key at the front desk when you go out. The room number here is 311.”

The man passes me a key, and use it to open the closet.

“I understand.”
“Enjoy your stay.”

He leaves.

I try sitting on the bed.
It’s not really soft, but it’s not hard.
It’s a good bed.

I lower my rucksack, and pull out my luggage.
I can leave the jersey in the room. The village chief said it was valuable, but I

won’t be too worried if it is stolen.
The cheap leather shoes are the same.

There are two drawstring bags in the rucksack which have money in them.

I put the copper sword in the closet.
Since I learned kendo, I can fight easily with a sword in each hand, but when a fight starts I’ll pull out durandal.
The scimitar is light and easy to hang at my waist.

I look at the room key.
There are characters written on it that are probably the room number.
Is that the character for one that forms a line?

Well, it doesn’t matter.
Should I go to the Labyrinth?

I stand up, and sling the rucksack over my shoulder.

Chapter 15 - Explorer

I turn in my key, and leave the inn.
I look out at the city, and then head towards the castle gate.

There are still no guards at the castle gates.

I leave the gate and make my way towards the forest.
The Labyrinth should be just inside the forest I was told.

I head through the field.
Just before entering the forest, a black wall appears to my left.

What's that?

As I wonder about it, a person comes out through the wall.

Adventurer Lv 19

Knight Lv14

Swordsman Lv42

Explorer Lv 41

Shinto Priest Lv39

Wizard Lv40

Oh! It's a Wizard! A Wizard!

Is that traveling magic?
Amazing.
I want to use it.

Are these six people a party?

"It's here."
"I see."

The adventurer speaks, then the knight nods and they enter the forest.

The knight looks rather pompous.
Even though he's the lowest level.

I follow the six people. They go to a place with a small hill that sticks up from the ground. There are black walls similar to the one from earlier surrounding the hill.

Is that the entrance to the Labyrinth?
Instead of felling like a hill, it's more like a Kamakura made out of soil. Did only this part appear and the rest is underground? [TN Kamakura: Mid-January festival where children make snow huts to play in.]

A single person stands near the entrance.

Explorer Lv18

"How far are you going?"
"Three floors in, since it just appeared."

The two explorers spoke.
The one being asked is the explorer who just arrived.

"What do you want to do?"
"We'll start with the first floor, and see how we go."

The explorer asks the night, and the knight issues instructions.
The knight seems to be the party leader.

They approach a black wall, and disappear through it.
Is this where you get in?

Should I go too?
I bring up my character stats, and move my points from discount to weapons 6.
I put a bonus point into shortening incantations.
It's hard to recite them while fighting.

After putting a point into incantation shortening, the skill changes to incantation omission.
It's good that it doesn't decrease 10% at a time.

Should I put a point into increased critical chance?
I put a point in there, and the skill changes to a 10% rise.
I put the rest of my points in it, and get it up to 30%.

I finish changing my character stats.

I hang durandal at my waist, and approach the entrance.
The explorer near the entrance doesn't say anything to me as I pass.

Timidly I walked into the black wall.
It let me through without trouble.

For a moment I pass through a pitch-black area, and then I find myself in the Labyrinth.

I find myself in a small cave-like room.
It's around a 4-5 meter square room.
The room is dimly lit up.

Paths lead from the small room.
One straight ahead, one to the left, and one to the right.

There is a black wall behind me.
It's the "door" that I have entered through.

The paths leading from this room are dark tunnels.
They are relatively small, with a width of about three meters.
It's too dark to see the end.

The path straight ahead turns into a crossroad straight away.
Looks like this will be complicated.

I haven't prepared anything for mapping. Will I be alright?
Is it going to be dark in the rest of the Labyrinth?

Those six people didn't look to be carrying lights.
Maybe the Wizard used some kind of light magic.

For now, I'll try always sticking to the left wall so I don't have to worry about mapping.
When you enter a maze you won't get lost if you stay along one wall.

I head down the path to the left.
The left path soon splits into two paths.
The walls and floor all feel reasonably solid.

When I step on the floor, the part I step on gives off some dim light.
The light isn't much, and I'm worried it might make me easier to find by demons.

After walking a little, I hear a noise behind me.
I turn to look back at the previous room and see a group there.
Six people, five Knights and an explorer.
They walk into the black wall and disappear.

It seems the black wall still connects to the exit.

I check my job settings.
I've entered a Labyrinth, so maybe I got something?

Explorer Lv1
Effect: Small strength rise, Skill: Item box, party organization, dungeon walk.

It's there.
Is an explorer a person who finds Labyrinths?
I seem to have gotten it from entering the Labyrinth.

I fiddle with my jobs, but can only put Villager Lv3 or Thief Lv3 in the first spot.
It's the same as before, maybe because I used a bonus point.

If I consider the intelligence card, I should not put thief as my first job.
The first job seems to be shown on the intelligence card when people look at it, so it would cause trouble if people saw my job was thief.

I leave Villager Lv3 as the first job.
Hero Lv1 has a large effect, and I leave it as the 2nd job.
I set the third job to Explorer Lv1.

I try to use the new skill.

“Item box!”

Before I finish speaking, some kind of box appears in my hand.
Well, it’s more like the entrance to a box. Looking at it from the side it has no depth, it’s just a doorway.
Is this space magic?

It came out halfway through trying to activate the skill.
The incantation shortening skill probably caused it.

What happens if I talk about the item box in a conversation?
It feels like I’ve just discovered a weakness to the skill.
I don’t have to pray for it to appear the way I do with stats, though it’s possible it won’t appear if it’s just part of conversation.

I take the scimitar from my waist, and place it in the box.
There was no problem putting it in, despite it’s length.

After taking my hand away, the entrance vanishes.

After saying “item box” again, the box reappeared.

The scimitar is in the box.
Somehow I get the impression that the item box is full with one scimitar in it.

I want to try out various things on it, but I shouldn’t be fooling around in a Labyrinth.
It’s possible I’ll be surprised by a demon.

I take my hand away, and the item box vanishes. I want to try out my next skill.
Party organization. Well, I guess there is no point when there is just one person.

“Dungeon walk.”

When I use this skill, I get an understanding that it wants more information from my thoughts.
Information on where I want to go.
I imagine the small room I first appeared in.

A black wall appears near me.

I walk into the black wall.
The place that I appeared is the small room from a little while ago. There is the black wall ahead of me which is the exit from the dungeon.
The black wall behind me disappears as soon as I step out.

Nice.
It seems I can teleport to places I can remember.
Judging by the name of the skill, this only applies to places in the dungeon.

No, I watched the party from before come from a black wall before I entered the dungeon.
The wall that the party of six people came from.

“Dungeon walk”

I recite the skill while thinking of the trees in the forest.
A black wall appears, but I am not able to enter it.
Is it useless if it’s not in the dungeon?

Well, it’s not something to worry about.
Mapping might be unnecessary now too.

“Dungeon walk.”

I use the skill again to return to where I was a short while ago.
A black wall appears….
But I wasn’t able to enter it.

What happened?
Why?

Lack of MP?
That shouldn't be it. The black wall appeared.

Maybe the places I can go are limited?
Maybe to just small rooms like this one, or places with a door?

There seems to be no other way, so I go on foot.

Next, I'll try Overwhelming, the hero skill.
Though, I think I can probably only try out this skill during combat. Is that right?
I don't really have a basis for that thought.
It's possible it's a passive skill I've been using all the time already.
No, that's probably wrong. It has an incantation.

I continue on.
Something is moving further into the Labyrinth.

Needle Wood Lv1

It's a humanoid demon with a green head and a brown body.
It's not very big, and quite thin.

How will things go with durandal?
I draw the sword and rush forward.

"Overwhelming!"

I shout out, and swing my sword down on it's left shoulder, cutting straight through it.
It's brown body falls to the ground.

Ah.
A single blow.
I wonder if I look cool?
It looks like my finishing move has been decided.
I imagine myself defeating the strongest demon with this technique.

Though, durandal is the reason for doing this in a single blow.

Nothing happened.
Nothing changed.

No, it's different.
I don't have enough MP.
The skill didn't work because I don't have enough MP.

Since I get the Skill: Overwhelming at Hero Lv1, I should be able to use it with the MP of Hero Lv1.
But my MP was insufficient, so I wasn't able to use the skill even though I remembered the incantation.
Maybe I used too much MP trying the dungeon walk? This is the second time I haven't been able to use it.

Branch.

When the Needle Wood disappears, there is a tree branch remaining.

I try to put it in the item box, but it doesn't work.
The item box is full with just my scimitar in it.
Well, that's how it is.

There's no helping it, so I put the branch into my rucksack.
It's a ten centimeter long branch. Will it be used for firewood?
I don't think it will sell well.

I start looking for my next target.
My MP has probably recovered because of durandals MP absorption, but I'll hunt another two to be sure.
It's annoying that I can't work out how much MP I have.

Needle Wood Lv1

I head towards the demon that appeared.
As I approach, the Needle Wood raises his left branch. He looks like he's attacking.
But, my attack is faster.
From his right shoulder to his left side I cut straight through him with one swing of the sword.

The Needle Wood becomes smoke and disappears. It leaves a branch.

I put it in the rucksack, and continue on.
I killed another, and then head left at the next split in the path.

There's another party up ahead.
All the members are surrounding a Needle Wood.

There isn't any way past them, they are straight ahead.
I got here by walking along the left wall to stay safe.
I have dungeon walk though, so I should be able to get back to the first room from anywhere.

I turned back to the last fork, and took the other route.
There's something up ahead.

Needle Wood Lv1

The slight glow from the ground at my feet is a disadvantage.
I have to be careful not to be hit by a surprise attack.
I don't know if the demons move around relying on their sight.

"Overwhelming!"

I run towards the demon, and recite the skill.

Nothing happens.
Wait, no, something is different.

The demons movement has gotten slower.
It's like the demon is moving in slow motion.
I approach the demon in the meanwhile.
I have an idea that I want to watch it a bit longer, but I ignore it and raise the durandal.

Is the demons movement slow?
Or is my movement fast?

I swing the durandal through the Needle Wood that didn't even get a chance to be ready to attack.
It becomes smoke and disappears. It feels like I've calmed down a bit too.

The effect of the skill appears to be acceleration, or maybe a boost in agility.
It will be a very useful skill if it lets me out maneuver an enemy.

I'm feeling a bit depressed, maybe because of the MP use?
When my MP starts running low I start feeling rather bad.

The skill must take all of my MP, though some will have recovered from durandals MP absorption.
The wave of depression goes up and down like a roller coaster.

I have a strong mind, but I could get quite sick if I repeat this.
I won't be able to use it much until I have more MP.

I try to calm down a bit, and check my stats.

Kaga Michion: Male, 17 years old. Villager Lv4, Hero Lv1, Explorer Lv1.
Equipment: Sandals, Leather armor, durandal.

My level has gone up, but only for Villager.
Hero, and Explorer's levels did not change.

I've defeated four Needle Woods.
If I only need 1/5th of the required experience to level up, and I'm also getting 5x more experience than normal, I should be leveling 25x as quick so it's like 100 Needle Woods worth of experience was hunted.
Is it really quite hard to level up?

The levels of people in this world give an impression of not being very high.
It's different from a game, it might take me dozens of years if I keep working steadily.

The level hasn't gone up after hunting 100, so for a Lv1 Explorer, if he hunts one every day for three months it won't be enough for him to get to Lv2.
That seems quite slow.

Or, maybe my experience bonus doesn't work?
Is Explorer harder than normal to increase? Hero didn't become Lv2 either, and Villager went from Lv2-Lv4. Different jobs might need different experience levels.
And what is my experience distribution like with three jobs?
I thought it would have been 1/3 each for three jobs.

Oh, I want a walkthrough.

I checked my character stats.
Since Villager increased by one level, I have another bonus point.

I removed my points from increased critical strike, and got incantation omission.
I've only attacked four times, if my crit rate is 5% then it probably hasn't even happened once yet. [TN not sure why it's 5%, probably some translator fail here]
Since I'm killing things in one shot, there is no point even if it works.
There are now two more points in incantation omission, and it's become blurred out.

Is the skill complete with only 3 points?
That's pretty good.
Even if it's just a percentage shorter I'd be happy.

When I used incantation shortening, I only had to recite the name, and not the incantation.
With omission, will I just have to think about it?

To test it out, I think about the item box and the entrance to it appears in my hand.

Chapter 16 - Demon Room

Another dead end.
I hit many dead ends while exploring the labyrinth.
This Time I arrived at a dead end 2 meters after taking a left on that T-junction.

There seems to be many dead ends in this labyrinth.

I've repeatedly hit dead ends since a while ago.
As one would expect from a labyrinth.

Could it be that I've been going around in circles.

Or that is what I thought, but this the first time I encountered this dead end.
It's about two meters, so I can clearly see the dead end.

A large wall stood in the way.

It looks similar to the cave's walls.
No.

There is a slight sense of incompatibility.

Something is out of place.
I approached the wall to investigate.
I strain my eye in the dim light.

Suddenly, I hear a rattling sound.

The wall collapsed.
Actually, rather than collapsing the wall slid down.

The disappearance of the wall reveals a way.
A small room appeared on the other side of the wall.

A hidden room.

By any chance, could the other dead ends be the same?

I didn't notice.

Should I go back and check them all?
The last discoverers are still there.

A party of six knights.

4 are sitting down, and 2 are sprawled out on the ground.
One of the sitting knights is the beautiful female knight that gave me the bounty money.

When I entered she glanced at me for a second and then returned her gaze while seeming uninterested.
One of the sitting men approached me.

It is the apprentice knight who was in the knight building.
Are they all the knights from the town?
[It is safe here.]

[I see]
What is safe?
[Are you alone?]

[That's right]
I'll probably understand if I take a look.
I would rather talk to the beautiful knight rather than this apprentice knight.

Talking to a beautiful woman is preferable even if they are strangers.
[You won't be able to earn much money in such a labyrinth, it's hard isn't it]

[Is that so?]

[If you go to the right side of the junction, there seems to be an entrance to the second floor.]

I see.

It seems to be a bad topic; therefore I try to change it.
[There is nothing but needle Woods around here.]

[It's because it's the 1st floor.]
Oh.
I think I said something strange.

I should leave before I let slip anything else.
[Yea, I'm sorry to disturb you.]

[No not at all, take care]
I came out of the small room.

The wall opened when I came and closed when I passed.

It feels like an automatic door.
Might it be the case that even if it seems like a dead end it is actually the same as this dead end?
Should I go back and inspect the other dead ends?
While returning on the road, I thinks about the conversation with the apprentice knight.
Since he said it was safe does that mean that the demons do not enter that room?

I plopped myself down.

Also, it seems I am not able to earn any money through this labyrinth.

To get to the second floor I have to go right at that junction?
I checked a dead end.

There seems to be nothing.

As for the second one, the wall slid and a small room emerged.
As expected, it seems that there were other dead ends like that.

I stepped into the room while thinking …. .
There it was.

A green head and brown body.

I slashed it from the shoulder to the leg.
No, it's not only one.

There is a group.

It's a bush of needle wood, or perhaps I should say a thicket, no more like a forest.
A blow came from the right, I dodged using my right hand and leg.
I raised my right elbow, and received the blow coming from the left with Durandal. I used the sword to crush the enemy's head.
I concentrated on using dungeon walk, but the black wall doesn't appear.

I thought that something like this was probable.

Probably this skill couldn't be used while engaged in battle.
I should have tried it when there was only 1 enemy, but it's too late now.
There are 10s of them, more likely dozens, at any rate there is a terrifyingly large number of them.

It's fortunate that I'm at the door at least this way I'm not surrounded.
Should I escape?

That is probably impossible.

In that case it's probably better to fight here.
I cut down the needle wood to the right.

While there was a chance, the needle wood on the left attacked.

A pain runs through my left shoulder.
The entrance of the small room was quite wide.
It will be impossible to block it alone indefinitely.

If they manage to get behind I'll receive attacks from 360 degrees around me.
I need to at least place a wall at my back.
I move to the right while disregarding the demon on the left.

I concentrated on "Overwhelming".
They stopped moving, I repressed the feelings of excitement. And cut the needle wood to my right with Durandal. Successively, I raise the sword to take down the demon in the middle, but the time delay effect ended.

I still managed to defeat the middle demon.

Moving one more step, I rained blows on top of the demon to the right.
I enter the room, and move along the wall.
When there is a wall to my back I can only receive attacks from 180 degrees.
If I can move to one corner of the room the attack range will shrink to 90 degrees; although it is probably impossible to do so now.
The movement of the needle wood on my left dulled for an instant when I moved.

I used that chance to cut the needle wood in front of me down.

The space created by the death of the needle wood was immediately filled with another demon.

I stepped back and set myself against the wall.
I block a branch attack from the left with a sword.

But, I took a blow from the right side.
“Guh”.
I return the attack and cut the needle wood on the right.
Then I’m hit on my unguarded left shoulder
“Guwa”.
I attacked the demon on the left.

Once again on the right.
It hurts.

I have received an attack.

Since it is not one-on-one, there is no helping it.
I swing Durandal and cut the needle Wood to the right up and down.
I have Durandal.

When the HP absorbed through Durandal is greater than the HP lost in combat it’s not a problem.

At present I have a lot? In any case it’s difficult to grasp with intuition.
Durandal also has MP absorption.

I concentrated on “Overwhelming”.

It worked, I repressed the happiness I felt as I killed the two approaching needle woods. (tln: took my liberty with this line.)

When it lost its effect, I promptly returned to the wall.
I cannot let them circle around me.

I dodge an attack and cut down the demon to my right.

If possible, I’d like to reach the corner of the room since we’ve been drifting to the right.
It looks like a few needle woods are not enough to recharge the MP consumed by “Overwhelming”.

It’s better to use it after MP becomes full to suppress negative feeling as much as possible. Although, the situation might worsen if I don’t use it much.

It might be more sensible to use it as soon as I have enough MP.
Receiving the attack that came from the left with Durandal each needle wood is mown down.

I received a blow to my unguarded right shoulder.

The seesaw like offense and defense starts once again.

I seem to be able to cover the HP lost through Durandal’s HP absorption.

However, I cannot feel relieved.

If I receive several attacks consecutively, I could reach a critical state.

At present, a dangerous balance is kept.

I’m aware of my possible death.

Even though this is a different world, it is still reality.

To be knocked down by a demon here would mean absolute death.
[Umu].

Death is close to me, it is too close to myself.
It is scary, but not frightening.

It does not make me quiver, but I can't laugh it off either.
Is it because I'm fighting?

I was cool-headed, as I stared at the impression of death.
I cut a needle wood and made it collapse.

I receive a blow from the side.

The seesaw like offense and defense continues.
I avoided the branch and countered with Durandal in return.
I aim for the corner as much as possible while scattering the demons.
Before I was aware there were only two needle woods between me and the right corner.

There is my chance.

I concentrated to use "Overwhelming".
I first defeated one of the needle woods obstructing the way, subsequently I killed another demon. Although Overwhelming's effect finished, I raised Durandal and delivered the final blow to the last needle wood blocking the way to the right corner.
I place myself in the corner while avoiding the attack of the demon which finally caught up.

I can only receive attacks from 90 degrees around me.

I took a stance with Durandal, and focused on the demons.
The enemy's numbers were reduced.

I notice this after I calmly take a look around.
I felt that I was cool-headed and stared at the death, but it does not seem I was calm at all.
Only several more remain.

Was it not necessary to forcibly secure a corner?

I need to be calmer, the state of the enemy's power should always be grasped.
My hand seems to be moist.

I have to be careful. If Durandal falls out of my hands, it probably ends there.

I separated my right hand and the left hand in turn and wiped the sweat on my pants.

Meanwhile, I am exposed to attacks several times, but that is unavoidable.
I grasp Durandal and run to the right.

The first needle wood on the right received a blow to the trunk.

If there are only this many then moving around more aggressively should be fine.

I raise Durandal while advancing and slash the demon behind me.

I cut off a branch that was attacking me from the right and use opening to slash down at the demon.
I attack the demon to my right, then sidestepped its attack and delivered an attack of my own.
I exchange blows with the demon in front of me.
In the place where I cut of the needle woods branch came another demon so I had to back off and attack.

I cut down the needle wood replacing the one I cut earlier.

Then, used Durandal to deliver a blow to the head of the needle in front of me.
Only one remains.
The demon does not seem intent on escaping.
I brush off the incoming branch attack easily, I react through raising Durandal up, then stepping in with my left foot and finally delivering a blow to its shoulder.

[Fuu …]
I sighed.

Finally, the demon whom I defeated became smoke and disappeared.

I took a moment to collect my breath.
I looked around the small room.

Its size is four or five meters in each direction, it is the same as the previous room.

There are plenty of branches that were dropped by the demons.

There is also something in addition to the branches.
A leaf.

An ordinary tree leaf.

There are three of them.

Is the leaf a rare drop?
There aren't any other leaves.

There doesn't seem to be any treasure chests or legendary swords.
I confirmed it again while putting the loot into the rucksack.

Were there only demons in the room?

This is thought provoking.
I would have surely died without Durandal.

This labyrinth is proving to be more terrible than I thought.

Would the six knight party I met earlier be able to deal with this room?

Moreover, there is nothing in the room.

Tree branches and leaves also do not seem to be worth much money.
Is this why that apprentice Knight can't earn much money?

It seems that I would encounter other demons if I go to the second floor.
I collected all the branches, I look around one last time to confirm that there is nothing left, then I looked at my stats.

Kaga Michio: Male, 17 years old.

Villager Lv6, Hero Lv3, Explorer Lv4.
Equipment: Sandals, Leather armor, Durandal.

The speed of level increase is fast.

Explorer gained 3 levels.
Is it because my level rose that I did not feel bad the last time I used "Overwhelming"?
Because I did not feel like I recovered, Neither HP nor MP seem to have recovered when raising my level.

HP and MP will be restored through Durandal.

Should I explore more of the labyrinth?
No, it has yet to prove fruitful.

Even if I go on, it could prove to be useless.
Fatigue should be remaining.

Even Durandal can't remove mental fatigue.
I decided to return to the inn.
I used Dungeon walk while concentrating on the entrance room and entered the black wall that appeared.

I returned to the entrance room and exited though the black wall in the back.
I appeared outside the Labyrinth in an instant.

The sun has begun to set.
I thought only an hour has passed, It appears more time has passed than I thought, It seems that exploring the dungeon distorted my sense of time.

It'll be because I was feeling strained all the while.

I better take note of the time I spend the next time.

As I thought, it's probably useless.

I readjust the character settings and replace Durandal with the 30% discount.

Two points remain because Villager is now Lv.6.
What should I put them in?

I return to the inn while thinking about it.
I used "Item Box" and took out the scimitar.

Huh?

There seems to be space for things to be put in even with the scimitar.

Why did that happen?
Well, I'll get to it after I reach the inn.
I secured the scimitar to my waist and headed towards the town of vale.

Chapter 17 - The first medicine.

I walked into the town of Vale.

It's getting late in the evening, and the city seems to be getting quieter.
There are a lot of stalls closing down for the day.

Before long, I arrive at the Vale Pavilion.
The Lv28 Hotel man is inside.

"Welcome back."

This isn't the atmosphere of a high-quality inn.

"The key?"
"Here you go."

He passes me the 311 key.

"Is dinner ready?"
"Ah, there is a menu you can choose from when you enter the dining room."
"I'd like some hot water after dinner."
"That will be 20 nars."

Oh?
The 30% discount?
I'm reluctant, but I lower the rucksack and get 20 copper coins out.

"By the way, would this become firewood?"

I change my settings from 30% discount to 30% bonus sale price, and take a branch from my rucksack to show to the man.

"Is that a branch?"
"Yes."
"The heat from it is too strong for household use. The master blacksmith uses them. He's troublesome to deal with directly so I'd sell it to the guild."

So I can only sell it to the guild.

“The first floor of the Labyrinth here seems to have lots of Needle Wood.”
“Yes.”
“The second floor has green caterpillars, and the third floor has kobolds. It’s a rough place.”

I’ve only seen Needle Woods in the Labyrinth.
The demons on other floors will be different.

He said the Labyrinth here, so other Labyrinths must have different demons as well.
From his tone of voice, it doesn’t seem like these are easy demons.

“So that’s how it is.”
“Those are the first floors. You must be quite strong to go to such a place.”

The first floors probably aren’t worth much.
I’m confident I can get to some deeper floors.
Will they be difficult?
Hmmm.

I’ll lead the conversation.

“I’ll try to go as far as possible. Where is the adventurers guild in this town?”
“Four buildings to the left.”

The man points.
Was there a building like that over there?

“Should I go now?”
“They will still buy stuff if you go immediately.”
“Thank you, please look after this.”

I pass the room key back, and leave the Vale Pavilion.

I head four doors to the left.
I enter the building of the adventurers guild.

The inside is larger than the explorer guild. It's like a slightly big post office.
There are 5-6 people around.
The setup with a counter inside is the same as the explorer guild.

"I'd like to make a sale."

I stand in front of the counter.
This will be my first experience of selling in a guild.

There is a Villager behind the counter, of an age that it would be slightly strange to call her Onee-san.
I would call her face average.
But I'm comparing to Rozanne.

"Place your items here."

The woman holds out a large tray.

"Ok."

I pull the items out of my rucksack.
There are a total of 33 branches, and three leaves.

"You aren't part of the adventurer's guild?"

The woman checks.

"No, I'm not."
"The leaf is a raw material for antidotes. If you join the adventurers guild you will be allowed to buy antidotes at half price after selling leaves here, this helps since the antidote is necessary for adventurers."

Huh?
If there is antidote, there must be poison. The antidote would not be necessary if there wasn't any poison.
The antidote is a necessity of any adventurer who is in danger of being poisoned.
Was it a bad idea to enter the Labyrinth without having any?

“Can I buy some antidote?”
“If you don’t join the guild, there is a set price for it.”
“How much?”
“100 nars.”
“I see.”

It’s high, but not too high.

“You can remove the poison by eating the leaf too, we sell them for 80 nars.”

Won’t you be making a loss?
The Onee-san of the adventurers guild is very kind to teach me this.

“I see, then I won’t sell the leaves.”
“Ok, just a moment then.”

As I put away the leaves, the woman disappears into the interior of the guild with the tray of branches.

I’m bored, so I look around the guild.
The left wall becomes black suddenly.
People come out of the black wall.

Is that dungeon walk?

Can you use it outside of the Labyrinth?

Two adventurers have come out. There is no explorer.

“The town of Tahera, send us that way!”

An adventurer who came out says.
Nobody reacts to what is said, a black wall appears and they disappear into that.

It’s not dungeon walk, maybe it’s something like field walk?
Or is it a different skill?

That reminds me, six people came out of a black wall just before I arrived at the Labyrinth.

The explorer must have the dungeon walk skill, and the adventurer might have field walk.
If you can travel through the Labyrinth with dungeon walk, field walk must send you to other towns.

Maybe those two people went to the town of Tahera.

Why did they come here?
As I think about it, a black wall appears again and people come out.
Six people this time. One is an adventurer from moments ago.
The six people leave the guild.

Well.
What have they been doing?

“Sorry to have kept you waiting. Here you go.”

I turn my head to see the woman has returned with a plate.
There are six silver coins on it, and after counting for a minute it seems there are 43 copper coins, so 643 nars?

I guess it isn’t bad for a branch, but it’s not high.
At this rate, a gold coin each day is just a dream within a dream.
Maybe it will be different if I stay longer, or go to a deeper floor.

I switch my 30% bonus sale price to 30% discount.
It’s troublesome.

“Aside from antidote, is there medicine sold here?”
“Disinfectant, fatigue recovery, various salves, anti-paralysis, anti-hardening, and a cure-all.”

At a guess, the salves recover HP, and the fatigue recovery recovers MP.

“How much for the anti-hardening and the anti-paralysis medicines?”
“They are 100 nars each.”

Is the price the same as the antidote medicine?

“Ok, I’ll take two anti-hardening, and two anti-paralysis.”

For the moment I'll just buy two of each.
I don't know how much I'll need them, I probably won't need large quantities.

"Certainly."

The woman leaves for a minute, and returns quickly.
She places two white pill's, and two yellow pill's on the counter.

Anti-hardening.

Anti-paralysis.

"Hmm."
"The white one is the anti-hardening, the yellow one is the anti-paralysis."

They are split into colors?
I won't make a mistake anyway because of my judgement skill.

I put the four silver coins on the counter.

So anti-paralysis should cure paralysis as the name implies.
What about anti-hardening.
For when the body hardens? Does petrification magic exist?

I left one of the silver coins closer to myself, but the woman took it as she counted the coins.
Sadly it seems my 30% discount does not work for this.

I put the pills and leaves away in my rucksack. [TN: might have put them in one of the little drawstring bags.]

"What are the requirements for joining the adventurers guild?"
"It's rather simple. Be an explorer over Lv 50 that is not in another guild. If you would like to join I can bring you to someone who can set it up."
"No, not at the moment."

I quickly turned down the offer as I placed my rucksack over my shoulder, and left the adventurers guild.

So adventurer is a higher level job for explorers? It requires explorer Lv 50?
Or maybe there is a condition that is unlocked when you join the guild.

I heard that the relationship between the Explorer & Adventurers guild was bad.
That seems likely.
From the Explorers guild's view, the adventurers will be skipping them.
You could say that explorer's are eggs that will grow into adventurers, or from the other angle explorers are crap that didn't turn into adventurers.

I should be cautious if I consider entering a guild somewhere.

I return to the inn, and grab my key.
The dining room is right beside the foyer, and I go inside.

There are four meals on a table at the entrance to the dining room.

"You can choose your meal from these."

Aside from the Lv28 Hotel man, there is also a Hotel woman there gesturing towards the food.
Is she in charge of the dining room?

Seems like it.
There's no menu, do we just choose like this?
A lot of people probably can't read the menu.

The table only has one character written near each dish.
The same character is written on the key I have.

My key probably has 311 written on it for my room number, so the character next to the upper right dish is probably 1.

"This one."
"Certainly, would you also like something to drink?

Urk…
I expected this sooner or later, but was still surprised.
It still feels a bit strange.

“What drinks are there?”
“Beer, Wine, or Herbal tea. If you would like slime liquor then there is an extra charge.”
“Just herbal tea please.”
“Sure. Please sit and wait at any available seat.”

In Japan I had drank a little sake, but here I don’t know how much is safe to drink.
I have 33 gold coins in my rucksack to worry about too.

I sit down at a seat, and the food arrives straight away.
There’s some soup in a cup, bread, a stew with vegetables, and some roast meat.
It’s quite a large amount, but it needs to count as two meals for the day.

The bread is soft, and the soup and stew are both quite delicious.
The meat looks like beef and is passable. Some pepper goes nicely with it.
Wouldn’t the pepper be expensive, or do I have the wrong impression?

A meal like this would sell well even in Japan.
It’s quite a good meal.
The cost was slightly high, but including it feels like a good choice.

After finishing my meal, I returned to my room.
The sun has mostly gone down.
The room is red because of the last of the days light coming through the window.

Soon after I enter there is a knock at the door.

“Hello?”
“Excuse me, I’ve brought you hot water.”

A man I hadn’t seen yet brings in a tub of hot water.
He places the tub on the floor, hangs a towel on it’s edge and then leaves.
It seems I don’t need to tip him.

I remove my cloths, and wipe my body.
This world does not seem to have baths.
If it does, it’s probably a luxury just for the rich people.

Even this hot water, 20 nars doesn't seem cheap.
It's pleasant to have though since I've been sweating.

After washing my body, I wash my underwear.
It's the only underwear I have.
I don't know what underwear is like in this world, hopefully I can buy a spare pair.
Whoops.

If there is soap and detergent I should get that too.
Maybe there isn't any since it didn't come with the hot water.

Is there a toothbrush and toothpaste?
I don't know if these exist.

I want to buy some socks too.

I can't buy anything for five days I think?
That's inconvenient.
I want a convenience store.

Aside from a shopping list, I should think about the item box.
I made it appear.

First, I put the scimitar in there. There seems to be more space now.

I try to put the rucksack in there, but it doesn't work.
Maybe it's the size? I try the drawstring bag but that doesn't work either.
The rucksack and the drawstring bag are not items, so maybe it's useless?

I pull the leaves out of my bag, and then put them in next to the scimitar.
All two went in fine. [TN: Thought he had three? I've probably stuffed something :P]
The anti-hardening, and anti-paralysis medicines did not go in.

After moving the two leaves to the right, the two anti-hardening pills fit into a left space.
The anti-paralysis didn't go in, but they did go in further left.

Looking further left in the space, the scimitar appears.
I take out the leaves & pills.

Won't the coins go in there?

Silver Coin.

Oh, I can use judgement on it.
It didn't even occur to me to use judgement on a coin.

With this, the fear of getting counterfeit money is gone.
But using judgement on a coin one by one is also troublesome.

I can put four silver coins into it.
In the next space I can fit four silver coins as well.

The copper coins don't go in.
I'm not trying to mix coins, judgement doesn't work on them either.
Copper coins don't appear to be an item.

I pull out some gold coins.
Judgement works on them, and I can put up to four in.
It seems I can't mix the gold and silver coins together.
So I have 4 gold coins, then 4 silver coins, then 4 silver coins.
After removing the scimitar, 4 gold coins fit in there also.

So there are four slots, and each spot can stack up to four items.
Probably because I'm explorer Lv4.
It was full with just the scimitar in it at Lv1.

I take all the coins out, and put the leaves & medicines back into the box.
The item box is probably better to hold them in case of an emergency.

I need to think about things like this.

You might consider incantation omission to be an important skill.
It requires three points.
If my first job is level four, even if I don't cut back on points elsewhere I still have enough for incantation omission.

Currently Explorer is Lv4.
Should I swap it with Villager Lv6?

Is there a benefit if I remove Villager as my first job, and replace it with Explorer?
When I consider the item box, and dungeon walk, it is not possible to remove Explorer.

The advantage of Villager is that the level is already high.
If I raise it to Lv8, I can spend points on forcing an extra job, as well as incantation omission.
The bonus points required for the second job is just one, and the third job is two. The bonus points required for the fourth job doubles again to four.
At level 6 I have enough point to get the fourth job if I just settle for incantation shortening.

There's the possibility that Villagers level will increase faster than Explorer.
If I get to 16 spare bonus points, I can get 10x extra experience, or 10x decrease required experience to level.
Putting the job with the fastest growth as the first job will become an excellent advantage in the long run.

However, 16 bonus points is a long way off.
Also, with a fourth job my experience gain may be split into quarters so I'm not sure how beneficial force job really is.

I will make the first job Explorer.
I open my job settings.

Soldier Lv1
Effect: Small physical strength rise, Small HP rise, Skill – Rush.

Swordsman Lv1
Effect: Small physical strength rise, Small HP rise, Skill – Slash.

Merchant Lv1
Effect: Small int rise, Small spirit rise, Skill – Calc

Herbalist Lv1
Effect: Small int rise, Skill – Crude drug creation.

All of a sudden I have four more jobs.
Why did I get so many?

Perhaps after hitting Villager Lv5 I met the conditions for some jobs.
Soldier, Swordsman & Merchant probably came from this.

A Herbalist is someone who gathers medicinal herbs.
I didn't get any medicinal herbs, but I did pick up the leaves.

Well.
This might mean I'll get more jobs at Villager Lv10 & Lv20.
Should I leave Villager where it is?
Though, if there is a job that requires Villager Lv99 then that's a long way off.
Well, I'll worry about that later.

I put Explorer in as the first job.
Second is Hero Lv3, and the third one becomes Merchant.
I should test the new skills too.

Soldier's rush, and Swordsman's slash. From the name of the skills it sounds like something to use in combat.
What about the Merchant's skill?

I try to use Calc, but nothing happens, nothing changes.
It seems I can't do anything with it.
I wanted to calculate 224 x 365.

As I think about it, the number 81760 pops into my head.

Is that the answer to 224×365?
Is calc a passive skill?

At 224 nars for 365 days a year for 60 years…
4905600.
If I had 500 gold coins I could stay here until I die.
Is that right?

100×100 is 10,000. Oh, that's correct.
1 million x 1 million is 1 trillion.
….um, I don't know if that one's correct.

I remove Merchant, and put in Herbalist.

I want to use the Crude drug creation skill.
I'll use it on a leaf.

It's starting to become dark as I pull a leaf from the item box.

I use the Crude drug creation skill….
Ten antidotes appear.

Chapter 18 - Boss

It's still pitch dark when I wake up.

I went to sleep quite early last night.
It was probably around 7:00pm when I went to sleep.
Yesterday I woke up extremely early at the chiefs house so I could travel to Vale, and I was busy all day so I became very tired.

When it gets dark there is nothing to do in this world.
There's no consoles, no TVs, no PCs, no internet, no anime, there isn't even any books.

Thinking about it, I could probably go to a bar for information gathering.

But that might be troublesome.
To begin with, I was a bullied child.
If I was good at speaking to other people I probably wouldn't have been bullied.

Secondly, I should not be wandering around strange places with 33 gold coins.
With 500 gold coins one could live their whole life in this inn.
If I estimate the value of 500 gold coins is equivalent to 100 million yen then 33 gold coins in 6.6 million yen.
Even in Japan there would be few people drinking with that much cash on them.

Third, I'm not sure how much alcohol I can drink.
If I want to collect information in a bar, I need to drink.
It wouldn't be information gathering if I was the one who got drunk first.
Getting drunk and talking about earth may cause some unwanted attention too.

How much alcohol can I drink?
Alcohol might not be the same as it was on earth, and my constitution may have changed after coming to this world as well. The intelligence card comes out of my hand now too.

Fourth, information on money-making is what I need at the moment.
Other information like what is common sense here I can just ask Roxanne about after I buy her.

Are there really money-making ideas in a bar?
More likely there would be honey traps and people trying to swindle me.
Someone like me who doesn't know the common sense of this world would be an easy target, especially since I'm carrying 33 gold coins.

Gathering information might be too dangerous.
Maybe having an early night is much better.

I held the scimitar like a hug pillow as I slept.
There are stories in Japan of master swordsman who sleep holding their swords.
I don't know if it's safe though.

I feel quite refreshed.
But outside if it still dark.
If I slept for eight hours it is probably 3:00am now.

My room does not have a toilet, so I have to go down through the lobby to get to the toilet.
There is a lantern hanging on the stairs, but it's light is very dim and it doesn't light up much.

"Are you going to the Labyrinth?"

When I get to the lobby I hear a voice behind me.

"oh….er."

I was startled, it felt like my heart nearly stopped.

When I turn around, the Lv28 Hotel man is standing at the front desk.

"Be careful."
"Can I go out during the night?"
"Yes, there are plenty of guys who go to Labyrinths in the middle of the night. Maybe not in our Labyrinth though because it isn't very crowded."

I see.
There isn't any difference between day & night in the Labyrinth.
Plenty of people would enter during the night, and an inn which caters towards people entering the Labyrinth would need to accommodate to that.

"You must be busy until midnight."
"We are part of the Emaro tribe. The Emaro tribe is special. We don't need much sleep, It's always difficult to explain to people from other races but it's possible for us to sleep in halves."
"Half, like right and left side?"

I learnt about a different species.
I remember a type of dolphin has it's right brain and left brain take turns sleeping. If both slept at the same time it would drown.

"Do you understand?"
"I have a bit of an idea."
"Wow, that's the first time someone's understood."

He is pleased.
The people who know there is a right and left side to the brain in this world are probably quite few.
Possibly the Emaro tribe evolved in the sea.
Maybe mermaids?
He has two legs though.

"Really?"
"People from the Emaro tribe dislike settling down. Most will take up strange jobs like working with hotels that the guild manages. The work suits us because it allows us to transfer all over the place."
"I see."

If they evolved in the sea, the custom of settling down would be quite strange to them.

I hand him the hotel key.
I go to the restroom with my rucksack over my shoulder.
There is nothing to do, so heading out to the Labyrinth now might be a good idea.

“Don’t you need a lantern?”
“I’ll be fine.”

I tried to look cool, and then went outside.

…

Damn.
It’s pitch-dark.

I can’t see even a meter in front of me.
It’s completely dark.

Isn’t there a moon in this world?
The whole sky is lit up with stars.
The light from the stars is too weak to light up where I’m walking.
Being from Tokyo, I find this darkness to be quite a shock.

Should I borrow the lantern now?
Because of the darkness it might be scary to head to the Labyrinth even with a lantern.

A ghost might blow it out.
I don’t really believe in ghosts, but I don’t yet know what mysteries there are in this world.

What should I do?
I don’t have the job of adventurer, so I can’t use field walk.

Oh, there was a warp incantation in the bonus skills.
Guessing from the name, it might be some kind of movement magic.

Meteor crash was beyond my abilities because I don’t have enough MP, but what about warp?
The amount of MP used for movement magic might be less than attack magic. Also, I’ve leveled up to Hero Lv3 now, and my MP is probably full because I had a good sleep.

I open the character settings and move the points from my bonus job skill and discount over to durandal and the warp incantation.

I face a wall of the Vale Pavilion, and think about warping. I imagine the small room with the doorway in the Labyrinth.
There should have been a wall in front of me, but when I reached out with my hand I didn't hit it.

It's a success.

Even though it's a success, I start feeling depressed.
Instead of the joy of success I get the sorrow of success.

Thoughts of "why did I bother coming here?" enter my head when I walk into the small room.
It's the small room with the doorway exiting the Labyrinth and the paths leading in three directions.
The small room was lit up, even though it's night.
Here is fine, despite the pitch darkness outside.

I don't want to use the warp ever again.
The MP it uses is probably even higher than Overwhelming.
Well, I should have expected this from a bonus incantation.

My mood feels like hell.
The only way I can get out of this depression is if I use the MP absorption from Durandal.

Suppressing feeling of not wanting to fight, I start heading down a path.
If I go right I can probably get to the second floor, but I head straight.
I don't want to go to the second floor. I don't really want to do anything.

Finally I see a Needle Wood.
I want to run away, but I hold back that desire and swing the Durandal.
A thought entered my head that I could never win, but of course I defeated it in a single blow.
When the smoke disappears a branch is left behind.

"Ah… that's it."

Feelings of relief go through my mind.
I let out a relieved sigh.

That was quite hard.
Using MP in large quantities is quite difficult.
I'd like to try to avoid it.

Kaga Michio. 17 year old male. Explorer Lv4, Hero Lv3, Soldier Lv1
Equipment: Durandal, Leather armor, Sandals.

After hunting another one, I checked my stats.
The jobs I had set are still shown even though I removed my bonus job skill.
The reason for having the third job as Soldier is because I might be able to get the Bounty Hunter job if I level it.

Also, after hunting two more demons I try the Soldiers skill Rush.
I'm not entirely sure what it did, but it felt like Durandal cut deeper.
It must be an attack skill.
It's hard to know how useful it is since I defeat demons in one swing with Durandal.

Sometimes it feels like ten minutes before I find another demon.
Are all the Labyrinths in this world like this? Or is this just a characteristic of the first floor?

This is faster than hunting Slow Rabbit's in the forest near the village though.
It's fast, but it doesn't feel like demons are appearing one after the other.

I probably came to the Labyrinth around 3:00am, so is sunrise in three hours?
Assuming I meet a demon once every ten minutes, I can hunt 18 of them in 180 minutes. I'm probably hunting more than that though.

Considering that, I decided to leave the Labyrinth after I found two leaves.
I didn't want to use the warp skill, so I used dungeon walk and then went home on foot.

The sun had just come up, so the timing was perfect.

I returned to the inn and had breakfast, then went to my room.
I use the crude drug creation on the two remaining leaves from yesterday, and the two from today, then I climb into bed for a quick nap.

The sale price in the adventurers guild is 1,878 nars.
Sale price for the antidote is 25 nars, I leave some in the item box instead of selling them all off.
So the guilds purchase price is a quarter of the sale price?

After nearly buying antidotes yesterday, and then selling them today, I wonder what the sales woman must be thinking.
Even if she thought it was strange, she didn't show it on her face.
She probably doesn't specifically remember what each person buys.

After that, I go to the Labyrinth again during the morning, and again during the afternoon.

The amount of money I made in the morning is 487 nars. I didn't sell any antidotes because I didn't return to my room, so that's just from selling branches.
I hunted until I got three leaves, and I had 25 branches to sell. It's better than the early morning because that was just two leaves and 23 branches.
25 branches is 15 nars each, plus 30% sale bonus end up at 487 nars.
The calc skill is not wrong.

In the morning, and the afternoon, I start searching the right side of the Labyrinth.

The dungeon walk seems to not only go to the room with the doorway, but to similar rooms as well.
I was able to go to the room that had the knight party in it yesterday.
The small room that had the large number of demons looked similar, but I'm unable to dungeon walk to there.
I'm not sure what the difference is.

There is a small room that I discovered along the right hand path that I can dungeon walk too, so I use that in the afternoon to search deeper from there.

I continue on while defeating Needle Woods.
I got lost a bit, and then found the small room that the two leaves appeared in.

A wall slides down with a nice sound, and another small room appears.
There were two parties waiting inside.

It looks like they are waiting in line.
I sit down at the end of the line.
I'm not sure why they are lined up, or if it is actually a line.

After a while, another party comes in behind me.
Six people with explorers and soldiers of reasonably low level.

"Line up."

The six people tried to pass and are shouted at by a man in the front.

It is.
I was right when I saw the arrangement.
It's that kind of mood.

I'm glad I understood.
I wasn't sure if I'd be fine reading the mood as a Japanese person in this world, but looks like I'm alright.

A door in the front opens up, and the party at the front head in.
Is this what you were waiting for?

"Is this your first time in the Labyrinth?"
"Yes."

The female explorer sitting in front of me starts to speak.

"There's a room ahead the leads to the second floor. There's a boss there. If you defeat the boss you can get to the second floor."
"Ah, Thank you."

So that's why we are lined up?
I listened well to what the kind woman was saying.
I will call her Nee-san. [TN: Older sister, I try to avoid these things where possible since they don't translate well to English.]

"When the previous party is defeated, the equipment they had is left behind. That's fate."

Nee-san looked at me and grinned.
I take back my previous thought.
The kindness was a lie.

When I die in there, my equipment, Durandal, will go to the party behind me.
Oh, if Nee-san's party is defeated, their gear will become mine.

"I see."
"The bosses are a lot stronger than the Needle Woods. If your not confident then you should go back."
"No, it's fine."

She's an explorer Lv5, and she seems quite confident.
Despite being Lv5.

Before long the previous door opens, and Nee-san's party enters.
The level of Nee-san's party is higher than the party behind me, so I don't think they'll be annihilated.

Will I be alright?
Well, there's Rush, and Overwhelming, as well as Durandal.

On the first floor I probably can't earn one gold piece a day, so I need to make this decision.
I have to go down.

Did Nee-san win? The door opens again.
I hold Durandal and enter.

After I enter, the door closes.
It's a normal square room of about 4-5 meters.
Nee-san, didn't lose.
She seems to have passed by safely.

Smoke gathers in the back of the room, and a demon appears.

Udo Wood Lv1

It's a demon that looks like a larger version of the Needle Wood.
It's taller than me, it's got a green trunk, and has long branches sticking out instead of hands and feet.

While observing the Udo Wood, a blue light appears near it's feet.
A magic formation.
まずい。
That's bad.

Seeing the blue shine, it looks like it will be effective.
It's the first time I've seen it so I don't know what it does, but it definitely seems dangerous.
Is it a magic attack?
There's also the possibility of support magic or defense magic, though it's better if they don't use it.
There's no time to watch it.

I raise Durandal as it charges in.
I drive the sword into it's shoulder using Rush. Durandal stops several millimeters into it's shoulder. Even if I use Rush it seems I can't win in one blow.

However, the magic formation disappears.
Is this the incantation interruption skill that Durandal has?
The demon can't speak, it can't use incantations and has to instead use magic formations. The magic formation is taking the place of the incantation, so the interruption spell works on it?

The Udo Wood swings the branch that was on the magic formation.
Durandal is still stuck in the demons shoulder so I can't block.
I manage to pull Durandal from his shoulder as he swings, but I'm struck by the attack.

The blow hits me, and causes some shock.
Udo Wood's attack power seems to be higher than the Needle Wood and Slow Rabbit.
The Needle Wood's attacks were already quite heavy.

He swings the branch again, and I hear the sound of it cutting through the air.
I blocked it with Durandal.

He continuously attacks with the right branch, and I avoid it by moving my body.

After the exchange I saw an opening and drove Durandal into it.
A return comes from the left, but I avoid it.
If I can clearly see his movement then it's not an enemy I can't fight.

Udo Wood cuts the distance between us.
I blocked a branch from the right with the sword.
A branch is swung from the left as well.

Crap.
Was the branch from the right a feint?

I can't avoid it this time.

I use Overwhelming and charge into motion with Durandal.
The demons branches move slowly, there is little room for me to escape and I swing with Durandal as I dodge.
The branch whistles past a millimeter from me.

Udo Wood collapses to the ground.
Somehow I've managed to defeat it.
The body shakes wildly, becomes smoke, and disappears.

Wand Cane. [TN: Wand was in english, maybe I should have used Magic Cane to sound better.]

There is a branch remaining.
Should I call this a stick? It's bigger than a branch.
It seems to be a cane, so it's some kind of weapon.

There is nothing else.
Even though it's a boss room there is no treasure chest.
So the only things left behind would be from the previous party?

A door on the far side opens up because the boss has been defeated.
I put the cane in the item box.
I double check the area for items, and then look for the way to the next floor.

TN: The author is alternating between calling it a wand and a cane.

Chapter 19 - The Second Floor

The neighboring room contained only a black wall/obstacle.
After entering that black barrier, after an instant of darkness, I came out into a small room much resembling the one on the entrance of the first floor.

It's dimensions were about 4-5 meters in each direction. Similar to the first floor, there were two paths stretching in the right and left directions.
Behind me was the black barrier that I had entered from. This too, resembles the one on the first floor.
If I were blindfolded and brought to both places, I wouldn't be able to tell the difference.

Dungeon Walk is probably usable here, so I can come and go as I please.
Shall I give it a try?

No. Even if I succeeded in my attempt, I don't know whether I'll be teleported to the second floor or some other place.

If I exit through the black barrier behind me, will I be returned to the same place from earlier?
Let's try that out first.

I exited through the black barrier.

After passing through the pitch black space, I abruptly exited into a dazzling place.
It's the labyrinth's entrance.
The explorer was standing outside same as yesterday.

My eyes haven't really adjusted, but from the looks of it, it'll be nightfall in a few hours.
I've finally come out. I think this is enough action for today.

From the opposite side of the road, a party of six came along.
The explorer of the party started conversing with the explorer's standing at the Labyrinth's entrance.

“How far did you get”
“The fourth floor.”
I listened attentively to their conversation from the side while pretending to confirm the contents of my rucksack.
Information gathering is important.

The party’s explorer peeked at the Knight’s expression.
The knight seems to be especially significant within the party.
Probably something like that, anyways.

“Was there anything on the fourth floor?”

asked the knight, directly addressing the explorers standing at the entrance.

“Mino. From the first floor onwards, there were needle wood, green caterpillar and kobolds”

“We’ve dispatched the kobold’s of the third floor. Let’s begin from the fourth floor.”

Looks like the combination of this labyrinth’s monsters was a failure after all.
The knight nodded at the party’s explorer.

“We have 800-1000 items. Item box, open!” (Some chuuni chant.)

That is the incantation for summoning the item box.
The party’s explorer retrieves something from it.

A silver coin.

Though I didn’t get a good look at it, the retrieved thing is a silver coin.
Appraisal is useful after all.

The explorer at the entrance received it, it was a silver coin after all.

“Responding to the faith of companions, I have read the honesty of their hearts, Party Formation” (thanks for the TL thedefend)
The explorer at the entrance continues his chanting.
Is that the party formation spell?

As I was pondering the reason for the party formation, the party's explorer, accompanied by two others, entered the dungeon.
And then swiftly returned.

An adventurer from the knight's party repeated the party formation spell's chant.

"Great. Let's start from the fourth floor."
On the knight's declaration, six people entered the labyrinth.
After confirming their disappearance into the dungeon , I also set out towards town.

What did they go there for?
The two explorers have probably explored the labyrinth to the fourth floor.

The explorers can utilize dungeon walk to transfer to any previously visited location within the labyrinth.
I've seen the place the six transfer to a number of times. Not only the chanter, but also the party members with him are transferred.

The explorers standing at the labyrinth's entrance are guides who guide parties till the fourth floor.
Explorers from a newly formed party have not entered the labyrinth before.
It seems that if they form a party, the guides can take along those explorers who haven't previously visited the fourth floor.
After being taken along once, seems like those explorers also gain the ability to teleport their respective parties to the fourth floor.

Also, if the party members do not exceed five, the guide can take along the whole party with them.
It is a well thought out strategy.

I should also make use of this.
But if I go to the lower floors, the monsters are going to strengthen too.
Since I don't have a grasp of my strength, It would be safest to sequentially go through the floors.

The two adventurers that came out of the Adventurer's guild yesterday did the same thing.

There are two adventurers who can use field walk、if I'm teleported by either once to another town, I'll also be able to travel between the towns.
In this world, the flow of people is unrestricted and frequent.

Putting a little distance between the labyrinth and myself, I erased Durandal through Character Reset.
My bonus points had increased by one. I seem to have leveled up without realizing it.
If I remove Boost critical rate and Boost MP regeneration rate which I don't know how to use in addition to warp, I can acquire the Fourth job which costs 4 points.
I adjusted my jobs with the job settings panel.

Kaga Michio, Male, 17 Years Old
Explorer Lv.8, Hero Lv.6, Soldier Lv.5, Swordsman Lv.1
Equipment: Scimitar, Hide Armour, Sandal Boots

To call my growth astounding would be a bit of a boast.

My earnings from selling off herbal medicine I made upon returning to the inn amount to 1911 nars.
My earnings from today amount to 4276 nars.
There's also the portion from the leaves I gathered yesterday, but since I didn't sell my wand, the balance comes up to more or less the same amount.
Since the wand is classified as equipment and not an item, I doubt I can sell it, even to an arms merchant.

Though it doesn't amount to one gold coin, I wonder if this is a fair amount of earning for one day.
I'd probably spend more money if I arranged my equipment, bought clothes and other daily necessities.
As of now, I have spent 224 nars on hotel expenses and 20 nars on hot water.
As to why my discount perks were ineffective when reserving hot water is a mystery.

After eating dinner,I'll retire for the night.
I've become completely accustomed to an early to bed, early to rise lifestyle.

After the sun sets, there is really nothing to do around here.
There's the option of exploring the labyrinth, but falling asleep midway would be lethal.

The sooner I go to sleep,the sooner morning will arrive.
Thus, I'll be exploring the labyrinth's dark interior tomorrow too.

After removing the Job setting and activating warp again, I came to the entrance of the second floor.
Appearance wise, it is impossible to tell apart from the small room on the first floor, but this is it,probably.

I wasn't particularly affected by the warp this time around.
Is that thanks to my level up?
Having said that, I have no intentions of continuously using it. That was really tough on my body.

Since the entranceway to the second floor from the first was on the right side, let's try the left path.
From the onset, I was confronted with a crossroad.
This is different from the first floor. Proves I've arrived at the second floor safely.

Needlewood Lv.2

The first monster I encountered was a Needlewood, same as the one's on the first floor.
Aren't the monsters on the 2nd floor supposed to be different? (Thanks thedefend)
It's probably called Lv.2 since it's on the second floor.

I slashed diagonally with Durandal and slew the monster with one blow.
The Needlewood may have been strengthened to Lv.2, but with Durandal one shot is all it takes after all.

My level up probably factors in a bit too.
It could possibly also be the effect of four simultaneous active jobs.
Is what I'd like to believe.

Green Caterpillar Lv.2

I encountered a Green Caterpillar next.
Oh right. The second floor had Green Caterpillars
Does the second floor contain only these two monsters?

A huge green hornworm.
Frankly, it's quite disgusting.
It's a soft and flabby larvae of about a medium sized dog's size. Despite the appearance, it's insides may be packed with muscles.

The hornworm quickly approached me //After observing it, I swiftly approached it. I swung Durandal down on it from above.

Thread.

A one-hit kill this time around too.
After the green smoke dissipated, a bundle of yarn was left over.

Even though I hunted quite a number after that but the only monsters that spawned were Green Caterpillar Lv.2 and Needle Grass Lv.2.
These two monsters seem to be the characteristic/typical of the second floor.

While pondering on that, I encountered both monsters at once next.

Needlewood Lv.2
Green Caterpillar Lv.2

Are they a group or did they just happen to be together?
Excluding the small room where a large amount of monsters were lurking, this is the first time I've met monsters in pairs.

First I drove Durandal into the approaching Needlewood.
When I shifted my attention to the green caterpillar,I saw an orange magic formation beneath it's chest.
The magic formation swiftly disappeared, and the Green Caterpillar spat something out.

It's thread.

The thread covered up my front.
It came flying while spreading in every direction. It was like I was watching the spider's thread in a Kabuki Dance (Spider's thread is probably a specific dance)
Wielding Durandal, I was able to fend off some of it but was unable to defend against all of it.

The thread I wasn't able to defend against twined around my hands, feet and head.
Disgusting. Not only that, it also made movement very difficult.
It pretty much felt like being tied up with sticky tape.

While I was struggling to regain my arm's mobility, I ended up taking a body blow from the caterpillar.
I was somehow able to bear it with my impaired legs. I swung Durandal downwards.

Due to either being unaffected by the thread's restriction, or due to it's crushing amount of offensive power, it still took only one strike from Durandal to down it.

Thread.

The thread entangling my body disappeared along with the monster.
The loot was a common thread.

The attack from before seems to be a special attack to impair opponents.
Handling one or two wouldn't probably be much of a problem. But what if they show up in a group?
Like in the small room on the first floor…….

This is unsettling.
I can think of nothing but unnerving outcomes

If several green caterpillars were to surround me, they'd immobilize me with thread from all directions,and when I'm immobile they'd shower me in blows.
If my movements were to slow down, not only would my extermination rate go down, Durandal's HP regeneration rate would also be affected.
Will I be able to withstand attacks from monsters in that state?

Would it be better to think of countermeasures beforehand?

I could also choose to not adopt any measures.
I'll deal with it after giving it some more thought.
I wonder if the small room which spawned a large no of monsters , is a considerably rare trap.

On the first floor was the knights six man party including apprentices. A low level party was also waiting outside the boss spawning room.
Can these people even handle the massive horde of monsters in the small room?
Though I was somehow able to hold my own due to Durandal, I believe this low leveled party will not stand a chance.
Yet their presence here despite that implies that the risk of encountering monsters in large groups is actually pretty low.

If the encounter rate was high, low leveled parties wouldn't be hanging around the dungeon.
Since they are, it proves that the encounter rate is pretty low.

Though I personally feel that their being way too optimistic, it may as well be that way.
Such an under-leveled party is also exploring the second floor. If they can do it, then so can I.

However dropping my guard would be foolish.
Anyone who does that in a labyrinth is headed for certain death.
What happens once can happen again.
I should stay on my toes at all times.

Now then, what sort of counter measure should I adopt?

The first counter measure would be to continuously level up.
Not only will that increase my extermination rate, but it'll also boost my HP and physical prowess.
If I level to the point where a green caterpillar's attacks are as effective as a mosquito's bite, it won't be a problem even if I'm ganged up on.

However it is troubling to think of the amount of leveling needed to achieve this.
Also, I have no method of judging as to what level can safely take attacks

from multiple opponents.
There's a time limit on Roxanne's purchase too. I can't exactly be going around carefreely grinding. I have to quickly reach the bottom floors and raise that money.

Another counter measure would be to learn an attack that affects multiple opponents.
If group lynching is my concern, might as well collectively attack the whole group.

Neither Overwhelming nor Rush are AOE skills (TLN AOE=Area of Effect).
I also tried out the swordsman class's slash skill but it was pretty much the same as the rush skill. More like, slash might just be the swordsman variant of rush.

The real issue is that attacking multiple opponents with a sword is incredibly difficult.
It's pretty much impossible without a cloning skill.

If swords are no good, then there's magic.
With magic, AOE attacks are possible.

I heard from the town's merchants that to become a sorcerer, you have to drink a special potion before turning five.
Probably an item of some sort.
Meaning I, who have long since passed the age of 5, am unable to become a sorcerer?

So far as the possibility is concerned, I'll just have to try using it.
When I stole, I got the thief job. When I worked the fields, I gained the farming job and upon entering the labyrinth, I gained the explorer job. I got the Herbalist job by picking herbs.
That being the case, if I cast magic even once, I should be able to get the sorcerer job.

Although, it seems it can't be acquired through movement or space magic.
It's quite obvious if you think about it. If you could become a sorcerer just by casting dungeon walk, then all the explorers would become sorcerers by default.

Rather than space or movement magic, the sorcerer job is only obtainable on casting offensive magic.
Since sorcerer's are offensive mages.

I became a trader by selling, a soldier by fighting, a swordsman by wielding a blade.
Thus I only gained them after satisfying the conditions for them.
Going with that logic, I need to use offensive magic to become a sorcerer.

Which came first, the chicken or the egg?
If you're a sorcerer you can use offensive magic but to become a sorcerer, you have to use offensive magic (TLN This guy's retarded.)
I might need a special item to achieve this.

But I happen to have bonus spells.
They should be usable even if I can't use typical magic.
As demonstrated by my use of warp magic.

If I use the offensive bonus skills, I should be able to acquire the sorcerer job.
Looks like it's finally time to use the offensive spells which were unusable when I was a Lv.1 Hero.

Chapter 20 - Wizard

Meteor crash!
It is the bonus incantation which I lacked MP at the time of hero lvl 1.

Am I able to use it now? I have piled up four jobs and Hero has increased to lvl 6.

If the Wizard job can be acquired by using the meteor crash, that's great.

Even if I do not obtain the Wizard job, I might acquire a weapon to kill groups of enemies, and that was the purpose from the beginning.

I prayed to reset my character.
One bonus point remains. My explorer lvl seems to have risen.
Warp is removed, the jobs are set and bonus points are put into the bonus incantation meteor crash.

Just in case, I have moved to the first layer of the labyrinth by a dungeon walk.
I hunt two needle woods to fill up my MP.

And for the demon who appeared next.

Eat this!
Meteor crash!

……

I pray and watched around, but nothing has happened.

Was it useless?

The needle wood tries to reach me, shake's a branch and attacks.
I killed it with durandal out of necessity.

Don't you have enough MP yet with hero Lv6?
How much MP will be necessary?

It must be a magic with a lot of power if it consumes that much MP.
That's the only thing I can think of.
I am looking forward to the time I can use it.

The meteor crash couldn't be used, but I don't feel down particularly.
It was within my expectations.

Hmmm, are there those kind of things too?
I do a character reset again.

Total MP release.
It's this.

It is a magic that uses up all currently present MP for a single magic attack.
Usually an attack magic can't consume all of the MP but with this setting it can become zero.
I do not think that my MP is not enough.

The problem is that the MP needs to become zero.
If the MP becomes zero will it be all right?
At least there should not be a problem. Unlike the total release of HP there will be no danger to my life.

Lets try it out near the small room where I encounter the beautiful female knight the other day. Just in case I should be able to escape from there immediately. Because demons don't seem to appear there it will be a suitable escape place.

I thought about the small room of the doorway, but a place where other people might pass by is not suitable. Though there might be the advantage that it is possible to run outside if there is an emergency, it's also a pitch black night outside at the moment. The risk however will not change.

I look for a demon near to the entrance of the small room. But no demon appears easily, maybe it is too hard for them to appear that near to a room where they cannot spawn.

At last I found a needle wood a bit away on the left side of the entrance. Can I attack it to follow me?

I turned my back on the demon and started running towards the small room.

In the place I am running from I was exposed to an attack from the back.
The needle wood seems to move faster than I thought.

Turning around I stared at the demon.
Then I activated the total MP release.

Something comes off out of my body. It is a very unpleasant feeling at the same time. MP is spiritual energy? Maybe that's it.

It's a success.
No, I have succeeded.
Even if I should have failed.

The needle wood in front of me explodes.
It becomes smoke and scatters.
What have I done?

I am certainly dead if caught in such a place by other demons. I am weak.
I have no talent either. I am stupid and have no merits ever. I am the lowest of man.
Let's live in this different world. The doubts are extreme.
A satisfactory place for me to live was not found on earth. It's the best to expect a dog's death in the place I am.

A beautiful woman like Roxanne shall be obtained by me? Surely she will not even notice me. That is a trap of the slave trader. It is a plot. It is trickery. It is fraud.

I pick up the branch and jump into the small room. When you pick up the branch at such time. Happy. I am Happy too! Who is a trivial, ugly miser?

I rested in the small room. To be trampled in a place like this is what a guy like me deserves.

It might be safe in this small room. To secure an escape place beforehand, how bad can a guy mess up? Try to think. This present state of me is a consequence of emptying my MP.

How to recover from it? I can only use the MP absorption of durandal. But how to do it when you fled in a place where no demons are?

My safe place was not prepared for a situation like this, it was necessary to choose a place where I could concentrate on fighting one demon even if it is unpleasant now. It looks like the idea itself was unskilled. There is nothing more fearfully than an incompetent supporter who is motivated. Because I tried to use an unfinished plan, it came to this situation.

Then should I go out? I should think about it. Is it stupid? Am I a fool? Or an idiot? If I go out now I might not even meet a demon. It is suitable for a coward like me to be frightened in this small room where demons not even can appear.

No, does a demon really not appear here?
Who decided such a thing?
It is speculation.
It is only wishful thinking of a fool like me.

Yes, it's like that. Even here it might not be safe.
Let's run away!
Escape!
But where to go?

I do not know of safe places.
Where ever I go there will be enemies, it will be dangerous everywhere.
Even in this refugee I cannot rest.
I will surely die in here.

I gathered willpower and somehow managed to go outside of the small room.

Go back! Do you want to die?
No. Even if I return, it's the same situation.
A demon will come to this place sooner or later.
Anyway, I cannot defeat a demon.

It's like this. This will be my graveyard.

I begin to walk unsteadily.
I should have bought MP recovery potions in the adventurer's guild at least.
I am a fool not to notice such a thing from the beginning.
It's cruel reality to die a dog's death here.

A needle wood appeared in the depths of the cave.

Run away.
I am still in time.
I should be able to rush into the small room of a little while ago.

No. I am not in time.
I cannot be in time.

While I hesitate, the needle wood approaches.
Partly unconscious I shake durandal.
Is it survival instinct? Or is it muscle memory that let me keep fighting?

The tip of my sword durandal catches the demon. The needle wood is cut and collapses.

Even in such a state the demon is defeated with one swing of the sword.
Even if I feel depressed, the offensive ability of durandal seems to be unchanged.
When saying that it's natural, is it natural?

I was discouraged and let out a breath. It was a close call.

It was not perfect, but MP seemed to be restored somewhat, too.
The pessimism until a while ago becomes light as if mist thins out.

This was dangerous.
It was really hard.
I was never depressed like this before.
Is this the downside of bringing MP to zero?
I don't want to suffer such a thing twice.

It's alright. I can do it if I have to.
I persuade myself.

I looked around and as if to celebrate my recovery a leaf was left behind by the needle wood.

Furthermore, I hunted three needle woods and recovered MP.
The pessimism from before faded away as if it was never there from the beginning.

I check my job settings.

Wizard lvl 1
Effects: small rise in intelligence, small rise in MP recovery.
Skill: beginner fire magic, beginner water magic, beginner wind magic, beginner earth magic.

There it was. Even though I had problems acquiring it.

The beginner's class fire magic, it might be powerful.
Am I able to use it now?

I replace the job swordsman Lv 2 with wizard Lv 1.

I went to the second floor.
I might not have good attack magic yet, but the second floor should still be alright even without a safe room.

While walking through the dungeon I concentrate on the beginner level fire magic.
Nothing happens.

Fire! Flame! Burn! Fire magic! Incinerate! fireball!
I try focusing on various words, and something above me lights up.

I seem to have made a fireball.

Oh!
Yes!
It's a fireball.

The fireball flies forward.

It's a success.
Finally I have magic.

I watch the fireballs destination.
It's an amazing feeling being able to practice magic.

I created a fireball.
I choke up with emotions from the feeling of coming to such an amazing world.
Sure I had the movement magic, and space magic already, but fire magic is special.
I caused a natural phenomenon with my own power.
I'm overflowing with emotion.

Previously I've emotionally hit bottom, but this will be something I can fondly remember.
I should also try out the wind magic.

The fireball continues down the cave until it disappears.

For a while I revel in the joy of becoming a wizard.
Nothing really changed, I'm still the same person.
However, I am now able to conjure magic.

A Green Caterpillar appears, and I use Durandal on it to recover MP.
Following that I throw a fireball at a Needle Wood.

The tree demon is covered in fire.
Wow.
It's amazing.
As expected of magic.

The fire goes out rather quickly.
Apparently I can't defeat it in one shot.
The demon comes at me while smoke still comes from it.
Well, it's beginner level magic so the damage is low, but the damage done appears to be causing the demon to move slower.
I swing Durandal at the approaching Needle Wood. It cuts it down in a single swing without problem.

If the beginner class fire magic is a fireball, is the beginner class magic for water a water ball?
I finish of another demon and then try to use water ball.
A ball of water appears over my head, and goes forwards.

Is this water magic?

I kill a Green Caterpillar to replenish my MP, and then try the water ball on a Needle Wood.
The demon flinches slightly, but recovers immediately and charges at me.
There are no signs that it had any effect.
I wait, and strike it with Durandal when it gets near.

The Needle Wood is a plant type demon, so fire magic is probably more effective than water magic.
I'll have to research it later.

Next is to try out wind magic.
Is there a wind ball?

I try it but nothing happens.

Wind arrow! Wind storm! Wind cutter!
Still nothing.

I thought that the wind magic would be a ball because the fire magic and water magic were both balls.

Wind ball! Air Ball! Gust ball! Gale ball! Typhoon ball! Tornado ball! Breeze ball!
There it is.

A breeze ball appears above my head and flies forwards.
It's probably a ball of wind, but I can't see it.
I can hear it however.

A gentle breeze, the beginner level wind magic.
The tornado is not at the beginner level.

I hunt a demon to recover some MP, and then look for another to test it on and two appear.

Needle Wood Lv2

Needle Wood Lv2

There seems to be groups of two monsters on the second floor as well.
I'll see if the fireball is effective on multiple enemies.

I use the fireball while glaring at the two demons.
The fireball appears… and passes between the two demons.

…well. That's how it is.
Even though there are two demons, two fireballs did not appear.
You have to aim at a target properly to hit it with a fireball.
Since I tried to specify two demons it just went between them.

I swing Durandal horizontally while aiming at the left Needle Wood.
The saint sword tore through the Needle Wood.
A branch is left behind as I continue my swing through the right Needle Wood. I cut off it's head and it's defeated.

There are two branches now, and I put them into the rucksack.

The fireball doesn't seem to be that strong a magic.
It's good for using on an enemy at a distance, but it only targets one.

Isn't there an AoE attack?
Fire arrow, Fire wall…
As I focus on it a wall of fire appears nearby.

It's about a meter wide and two meters high.
The fire continues to burn for about ten seconds.

A fire wall.
It feels like more of a defensive magic than an attack magic.
Would it be useful for me to use when surrounded by enemies?

Isn't there an AoE attack magic?
Hell Flame! Burn attack! Volcano Erupt!
Nothing. Well, the fire wall might be similar to the fireball in setting things alight.

Fire Strike! Fire attack! Fire storm!
There is a feeling of something happening in my body.

MP was used.
Fire Storm seems to be something.

However, even though it feels like MP was used, nothing happens.
Did it fail?
Maybe not, it could be because there are no enemies here.
Maybe it's a magic whic automatically targets demons.

I hunt two demons to recover some MP.
A Green Caterpillar appears and I use Fire Storm on it.

Red sparks dance around the cave, it feels like looking at fireflies.
The sparks gather around the demon, and attack the Green Caterpillar.
The Green Caterpillar burns red.
Although it looks quite painful, the demon endures it until it goes out completely.

It seems I can't defeat one with a single Fire Storm.
I drive Durandal into the head of the caterpillar dealing a decisive blow and it turns to smoke.

Fire Storm is the right magic name.
How does it recognize enemies? Or does it only target demons?
Well, now I should confirm if it's an AoE attack magic.
Should I look for two demons now?

Maybe I'll try it later.
I'll head outside now.

It's still dark outside the Labyrinth. When I look towards Vale I can see a pale light coming from the other side.
Soon it will be sunrise.

That was perfect.
I don't have a watch or a phone, but after coming to this world it feels like my biological clock has become more accurate.
Actually, there may just be a good balance with how exhausted I am.
I mustn't get overconfident about it.

I go back to the hotel for breakfast, and then return to the Labyrinth afterwards.
I go to the second floor again and hunt some more demons with Durandal to recover MP while I test out some more magic.

A Green Caterpillar is the first thing I see, and I launch a breeze ball at it.
It's still not possible to defeat it in one shot, but there is a visible wound on the caterpillar so it definitely did damage.

After hunting some more demons to recover MP I test out water wall on the next Needle Wood I come across.
A wall of water appears in front of me.
It's about the same size as the fire wall, though made of water instead.

Since it isn't like a rapid stream I doubt it can prevent a demon from getting through.
Is this how you defend yourself while an ally is using fire magic?

After a little time passes the wall collapses and water goes over the floor.
The water scatters everywhere.
It also got on my pants.

The water doesn't seem to disappear easily, unlike the fire.
Is that common?
I'm not sure, I don't understand the reason.

Can you really just make water? To test it out I throw a water ball at the wall.
It splashed into the wall, and then dripped down the wall.

Water can be made.
Water magic seems to be quite convenient.
When I get thirsty I can use it.
I'm not sure if it's fresh water though.

After defeating a Needle Wood with Durandal, I try out the breeze wall.
There seems to be a wall of wind.
I can hear it.

It's invisible though, so I'm not sure about it's dimensions.
I'm not sure how useful it is since I can't see it, but I try it in front of a Green Caterpillar.

Here we go.
As I wait, the demon stops before the breeze wall.
An orange magic formation appears under the Green Caterpillar.

I failed.
Even though I can't understand it's dimensions, the Green Caterpillar seems to know them.
Also, the wall of wind is obstructing me from going there.

After a short time the demon shoots thread.
He seems to have timed it with the breeze wall disappearing.

It failed even there.
While there was a wall I could have run away at least.

The thread entangles me.
As I struggle to free myself I am hit by the body of the Green Caterpillar.
I struggle to swing Durandal as the demon attempts another body blow.
The demon is defeated, and thread is left behind.

Since I was able to defeat it in one blow things didn't get out of hand.
The wall of magic seems to be hard to use well.
How should I use it?

Should I have defended with a fire wall when the demon shot it's thread?
I failed.

The other walls of magic were only a meter in width, so I probably could have gone around it and attacked.
If I want to block of a passage in the cave I'll have to use two walls.

Since I've already tested the fire, water and wind, next is earth magic.
What is earth?
A sand ball.

Nice! I guessed it straight away.
A ball of soil appears above me and flies off.
Or should I call it a ball of sand since it's sand ball?

After hunting a demon I test out the sand wall.
It was a wall of soil, the soil version of the fire wall.
After some time passes it collapses and leaves sand on the ground, just like the water wall.
There isn't any use for the sand, even if I can make it with magic.

Green Caterpillar Lv2

Green Caterpillar Lv2

After I hunt another demon to recover some MP, two Green Caterpillars appear.
This is good.

I use fire storm.
The sparks start to dance and attack both of the demons, dying both in red.
It is an AoE attack.

It's not likely that I can defeat them with just one fire storm.
I have to defeat them before they shoot thread.
I swing Durandal at the Caterpillar on the right while he is covered in fire.
I then swing Durandal at the left Caterpillar, just as the fire goes out.

Chapter 21 - Green Light

All things considered, I can use 3 types of spells from four elements, a total of 12.
There may be others, but I don't know.
Fire-hit, Fire-shoot, Fire-tornado, I have tried various things that came to mind, but it didn't work.
I can use ball for single target attacks, a wall for protection and area of effect storm attack – those three types.
For each magic types the words used are: fire magic – fire*, water magic – water*, wind magic – breeze*, earth magic – sand.

(TLN*: He describes here the pronunciation of words while casting. So it's not "Hi no tama" for fireball but actually "Faiyaboru").

Water magic and wind magic also don't seem to be used for healing and movement respectively.
I have tried spells like "Water Heal" or "Wind Wing" and although it didn't work I can't deny the possibility.

For now what I can use should do.
Next I'll test if I can defeat a monster with only magic.

Needle Wood Lv2

I present it with a fire-storm.
Only one appeared, but in preparation for group fights testing the fire-storm should be good.
I can feel the MP loss. Compared to single target "ball attack" the "storm attack" consumes more MP.

Sparks dance and attack the Needle Wood. The plantlike monster starts burning.
I couldn't defeat it in one blow, so I fired a second.
The second one still didn't finish it.
The monster approaches.

I got attacked before I could fire for the third time. The swung branch hit me.
The approaching burning red shape signals danger.

Suppressing the feeling of wanting to flee, I fire a third fire-storm.
I don't feel like winning, but I tell myself that it will all be good if I respond calmly.
In case of emergency I can use Durandal for a one-hit kill.

I dodged the branch by a hair's breath.
The third storm stills seems to not be enough.

I begin to cast a forth fire-storm.
It's not like it won't ever fall.
While evading the swinging branch negative thoughts start sprouting in my mind.

In the midst of flames the monster swings a branch.
I can't keep evading forever.
At this rate I'll die.
I have to somehow run.

Just when I turned around and begun running away the Needle Wood fell down.

Branch

Even though it fell from burning the dropped item seems OK.
I pick up the tree branch and put it in the backpack.

To defeat Needle Wood Lv2 four hits from fire-storm seem necessary.
I feel pretty down but I managed to cast four times.

I don't know whether to stay or leave.
Its good and all that I fired four times, but continuous casting twice is dangerous.
Maybe fire-storm costs twice as much when there are two enemies.
I wonder.

This is not good.
My thoughts became negative.
Its can't tell whether it is truly like that or its the negative thoughts.

I killed two monsters with Durandal and calmed down.

So far there was no instance of two monsters coming one after another.
Neither in the many small rooms on the first level, nor in the cave.
There was considerable time between monster appearances.
I can't ignore this, but i shouldn't become obsessed over the possibility of consecutive monster appearances.

There is also the fact that fire-storm consumes more MP than fireball.
AOE magic costing more MP than single target magic would suggest that when there are more enemies the chance of it costing more MP is very low.
Even if the number increases, it should become a little easier.

While judging calmly, being able to defeat with four fire-storms I'll somehow manage.
Needle Wood and Green Caterpillar are not so different. It won't be ten times in ten.(TLN: Bad TL)

This way the first objective of finding a way to deal with multiple monsters is complete.

Next I should think how to fight with magic as the core.
If I'm going to fight with magic, I'll put Durandal away.
If I put Durandal away I'll have 6 bonus points to assign to skills.

The points for being able to use Durandal are six weapon points for a total of 63 points.
By not using Durandal, both "Required Experience Reduction (1/10)" and "Gained Experience (x10)" costing 16 points, 32 points are used, but I can use both.(TLN: Possible bad translation – sorry I suck with translating calculations/counting.)
Right now I have "Required Experience Reduction (1/5)" and "Gained Experience (x5)", so picking "Gained Experience (x8)" is efficient.

Not having Durandal is scary to say the least.
It has the attack power to kill monsters with one hit, HP absorption and MP absorption.

By having HP absorption it is not so much of a problem when getting hit and MP absorption allows to continuously use skills.
As long as I fight using Durandal, I most likely won't die on this floor.

Removing Durandal I feel fear.
It is really discouraging.

Should I pick safety or experience x8.

Picking safety would dictate that I use Durandal like up until now.
Of course would be useful in a pinch.
But describing the actual situation is a bit troublesome.

I can think of a few possibilities.
A very strong boss suddenly appears.
Or possibly I feel needless anxiety.(TLN: I think he is talking about the negativity from mana deprivation)

Labyrinth is a battlefield, and just being on the battlefield a 100% safety is impossible.
Its not needless anxiety, but anything can happen on the battlefield after all.

But from another point of view, as long as one steps into the battlefield that is a labyrinth, one has to take the risk.
There won't be any gain without betting.

If I think about it, it's probably better to take the 8x experience bonus.
Getting to a higher level will decrease the risk in the long run.

I've confirmed that I can defeat a demon with just magic.
Logically this means that I don't need Durandal.
If I can defeat a demon with just magic then Durandal is overkill.

That decides it.
I removed my points from Weapons 6.

While I use magic I'll have to keep pulling out Durandal.
My MP recovery relies on Durandal's MP absorption after all.
It will be good if I can buy some MP recovery medicine.
If I get into trouble I can still use Durandal as well.

My bonus points have increased by another point, and I'm able to get the 10x decrease in required experience plus the 10x boost to obtained experience.
I removed the point from MP release as well and put it in increased MP recovery. The stats show the MP recovery has doubled.
That will help out a bit.

I take the wand & scimitar from the item box.
I haven't tried it yet since I was using Durandal, but the wand may be useful when using magic.
It might have a bonus like increased magical attack power.

What other reason would there be a wand class of weapons for?
Since there are wands, they should have benefits aside from physical attack power.
Maybe it has bonuses to decrease casting time? That wouldn't be helpful since I have incantation omission.

I hang the scimitar at my waist, just in case something happens and I need it.

Needle Wood Lv2

I attack the Needle Wood with fireball.
It might be my imagination, but the fireballs look a bit bigger so the wand is probably having some effect.

The fireball heads down the cave.
As it approaches the demon, he moves towards the wall and avoids it.

Crap.

So they can even avoid it.
I already knew I couldn't defeat it in one shot, so maybe it was a mistake to attack the moment I saw it.
It doesn't select it's own targets the way fire storm does, so I need to aim it well.

I try to fire a second fireball straight away, but it doesn't go well.
Even though I have incantation omission, it seems I can't fire them in rapid succession.

Finally it works as the Needle Wood approaches.
There seems to be a small cooldown time between using attack magic.
There's a small delay after it appears to, since it appears above my head.

The demon has closed in on me by the time I shot off the second fireball, and it swings it's branch at me.
I block it with the wand, and fall back a bit.

I attack again as I avoid it's swings.
It's on fire as it swings it's branches at me, and the sound of burning is quite horrible.
I block another attack from the left, and then I attack again.
There's a crackling sound as the demon burns, and then it collapses.

So I need four fireballs?
There isn't much difference between the power of fireball and fire storm.
Even if I don't use the wand it will probably be the same number of attacks.

I'm not sure if I got depressed a little?
The amount of MP that the fireball uses must be quite small compared to the fire storm.

Green Caterpillar Lv2

I watched the Green Caterpillar for a moment before using the fireball.
It tried to dodge, but the fireball ended up hitting it without problem.
Guessing from it's appearance, it is slow when trying to move sideways.
I attack again as it moves towards me.
As it approaches an orange magic circle appears underneath it.

The moment it fires it's string I use firewall.
The wall of fire blocks the space between me and the demon.
It's hit by the string from the caterpillar, and a light sound is hear as it burns it away.

I move around to the side and try to use a fireball, but it doesn't appear so I smack the demon in the head with the wand.

The caterpillar attacks me.
It charges me with it's body, and I narrowly avoid it.
It seems I can't use the fireball yet.
I smack it with the wand again, but I can't avoid it's next attack and take it head on.

Finally the fireball works.
The demon tries to attack me while it's burning, but I block it with the wand.

I fire the fourth fireball, and in the blast of flames the demon falls.

It seems the the green caterpillar needs four fireballs to be defeated as well, and I also hit it twice with the wand.
It feels like quite an intense battle if I don't defeat it in a single blow with Durandal.

Should I use Durandal after all?

No, today I should give priority to improving myself.
I still need to get enough money to buy Roxanne.
For that goal I need to improve myself to get to a lower floor of the dungeon a bit quicker.

If a battle with magic takes about a minute, and I fight 60 times a day, then my progress through the labyrinth will be an hour slower than normal.
One and a half hours slower if I fight 90 times.

Since I can kill everything in a single blow with Durandal it shouldn't be a problem for me to go to the next floor.
I might make a mistake if I go down too early though.

It's probably fine with Durandal.

Do not go… Do not go…
I'm feeling a little afraid.

I have a look at my character stats.
I'm still injured from the body attack.
I believe I can kill everything with four fireballs, but I'm not confident about four fire storms.
The lack of confidence probably comes the negative emotions caused by my lack of MP though.

I've got another bonus point.
That's amazing growth.
The two 10x experience stats are working great.

I select Durandal again, and look at MP recovery, it's next level is 3x MP recovery speed.
If the stat is similar to bonus Exp then it should increase a lot.

Will the MP recovery stat improve enough that it can become a substitute for Durandal?
If I cancel a forced job I can select 3x now.

Do I need to do that?
It's safer if I just use Durandal.
I'll keep working with 2x MP recovery speed for a bit longer.

I go hunting demons to recover some MP.
There's two of them.
Why do groups only appear at times like this?

I cancel the extra job and remove Durandal again.

Thinking about it, I've got the option to pay the explorer at the entrance to take me down to a lower level.
Lower levels shouldn't be any more of a problem.
It might be possible to recover the hour I lost down there.
Though, I still want to fight with magic a bit more.

Green Caterpillar Lv2

I shoot a fireball at the Green Caterpillar.

The fire wall from earlier was a bit of a hint about magic timing.
The fireball is quite strong, but I can't fire the second shot yet.
You can probably only use one spell at a time, so while you can still see your last spell you can't use the next one yet.

I fire the second one, and let it hit before firing the third one.
An orange magic formation appears under the demon.

I wait with my timing, and then use the fire wall.
There's a small sound as it eats the thread.

I try to test if I can use a different magic at the same time.

While the fire wall is still burning it seems I can't use anything.
Not just the fireball, but the waterball, breezeball and sandball also didn't work.

While the demon is burning, I confront it with the wand.
I dodge it's body attack while I smack it with the wand.
The wall of fire disappears and I fire of the third fireball, and after that the fourth.
The Green Caterpillar is defeated.

The cave in the labyrinth is about three meters wide.
The fire wall is about one & a half meters wide.
Unless I can increase the width of it, I won't be able to block off the cave.
If I'm attacked from both sides at once I won't be able to use it to protect my back.

Also, there's about a ten second duration on the fire wall.
Wall magic seems to be quite difficult to use effectively.

Needle Wood Lv2

The demon waddles in the cave ahead.
I let it approach a little, and then launch a fire ball.
I fire the second shot the moment the first is gone.
It gets into range of me before I fire the third shot.
As I dodge the branch, I use the third fireball.

So I'll be attacked before I can shoot four times, Isn't there a way to shoot faster?
I block it's branch and shoot the fourth fireball.
The fire blazes up and the demon collapses.

I'm feeling a bit depressed, but another one should be fine?

Green Caterpillar Lv2

I launch a fireball at the Green Caterpillar.
The second one is launched as the first goes out. One continuously after the other.
The Green Caterpillar has slow movements so I should be able to attack again from a distance.
The Green Caterpillar is closing the distance, but I use the third shot and it collapses.
Does each one have different stats? Or did this one fall after three fireballs because I went up a level?

I'm glad the I might have improved, but I'm getting depressed and can't really think about it.

2x MP recovery speed isn't a substitute for Durandal.
I open my character stats, and select Durandal.
Also, I have another bonus point.

I take a moment to think while looking at my stats.

Maybe there is another risk to using magic.
What if I'm seen using it by people?

Second job and job settings are bonus skills.
Most people in this world probably can't have the explorer job and wizard job at the same time.
Can a wizard learn space magic?

I use warp and dungeon walk, and I make use of magic.
If someone watches me they might notice I'm not chanting incantations.
The apprentice knight that I saw on the first floor has seen my intelligence card as well, so I should be cautious.

Should I use Durandal instead of magic to fight?
I should be safe if I use Durandal.

No, I'm still feeling bad.
Only using Durandal comes to my mind.

I hunt a demon and recover some MP.

How many people have I met on the second floor?
It feels like there isn't anyone here.
Is it because the Labyrinth has just been discovered? Is it because the demons here aren't worthwhile? Maybe the second floor just isn't liked? Maybe Green Caterpillars are just thought to be troublesome?

Well, the chances of running into anyone here seem low.
If they just see me conjuring then they'll think I'm a wizard.
The apprentice knight seemed quite exhausted on the first floor so he probably won't come to the second floor either.

I need to take some risks.
Low risk, low return. High risk, high return. That's a rule of any world.
I need to keep practicing my magic.
The dungeon walk & item box I can use after confirming there is nobody nearby.

I remove Durandal, and stop my fourth job. I select 3x MP recovery.
My current jobs are Explorer, Hero & Wizard.

Kaga Michio. 17 years old. Explorer Lv12, Hero Lv8, Wizard Lv5.
Equipment: Sandals, Wand, leather armor.

My levels have gone up quite a bit.
I got the Wizard job this morning and it's already Lv5

Current bonus point use:
63 points for 20x less experience required. [TN: at bottom]
31 points for 10x experience gained.
7 points for 3x MP recovery speed.
3 points for incantation omission.

3 points for Judgement, job settings & character reset.
110 points in total.

Chapter 22 - The Yellow Signal

I started the full scale exploration of the second floor.
Regenerating my MP with Durandal regularly, I took down the monsters primarily with spells.
Needlewood Lv.2
Green Caterpillar Lv.2
Conveniently Durandal was sheathed when a two man party of a needle wood and a green caterpillar appeared.
I cast firestorm the instant I spotted them.
Firestorm is a certain hit spell. There's no need to pull in the monsters.
I had prepared the second shot before the fire had fully extinguished.
And followed on with a third shot.The green caterpillar was defeated by the third shot.
Only the needle wood is left.
Receiving the swung branch, I incinerated it with a fireball.Seems like there isn't much difference in incinerating ability between firestorm and fireball for individual opponents.
Green caterpillar was downed in three hits but needle wood needed four.
Fire storm's MP consumption doesn't seem to vary dramatically with the amount of monsters either.
If a lot of monsters are defeated with 4 hits of wide area attack magic, then it's pretty efficient.
Is there no place around here like the first floors monster spawning small room?

Does the small room not appear until all conditions are fulfilled?
The trap by which demons spawn in large quantities seems to be rare.

While checking the ends of hallways for the small room. and drawing and retrieving Durandal (for MP Regen), I hunted monsters.

After exiting the labyrinth in between, I reentered after noon.

The green caterpillar was hit with a three hit combo of Water, Breeze and Sand Balls.
It doesn't seem to have a particular elemental weakness.

A four hit combo of breeze and sand balls took down the needle wood too.
Fire Magic doesn't seem to be their weak point either.

Since Water ball did not inflict any apparent damage (on the monster) earlier, I stopped using it.

Though I want to check it out, there are no apparent opportunities.

If you try to fire off four consecutive magics, you are inevitably exposed to enemy attacks in between.
Just in case I panic if it's not defeated even after a four hit combo, it would be preferable to have Durandal equipped.
But, since I have to draw Durandal when MP is low, I do not want to cast water ball as much as four to five times.

If two monsters appear while Durandal is equipped, recovering MP while taking one down and then taking down the other with magic is a plausible strategy, but.
But well, they're not something that appear so conveniently.

Needle wood Lv.2
Needle wood Lv.2

It finally appeared around the time I was thinking of wrapping up today's exploration.
I fired a water ball at the needle wood on my left.
I got two more shots in on the needle wood which had stumbled by a half step.

Inside the dim labyrinth. It's pretty hard to judge where to fire the next water ball unlike the fire spells which light up the surroundings.

Incidentally, all my delusions of being able to avoid detection when attacking from a distance were instantly dispelled.
The green caterpillars seem to instinctively know how to avoid breeze wall.

I stepped forward while readying Durandal. I cut down the right needle wood.
I avoided the branch swung by the left monster by a hair's breadth.
I summoned three water balls.
The monster didn't go down.
Thanks to the level up, it seems I can take down needle woods with a three hit fireball combo.
Since it can also be due to the effectiveness of the wand, let's try firing a

fourth shot.
The branch was energetically swung. Failing to counter, I took the hit head-on.
Seems like they are resistant to water magic after all.
In an instant, I mowed it down with Durandal.
The monster was cut in half from top to bottom.

Leaf.
The needle wood disappeared into smoke. Luckily, it also dropped a leaf.
The green caterpillar isn't dropping anything besides thread anymore.
Looks like there are monsters who do not drop rare items. Or maybe the drop rate is different?

Since I got a rare item, I decided to call it a day.
I cast warp setting the adventurer guild's wall as the target. I could transfer to some other place too, but I don't know if that would be good.
It would be preferable to not go to some shady place.

Though people also utilize the Vale Restaurant's lobby, I'd prefer not to.
Transferring to building's is the utility of the adventurer's field walk. I'll be regarded suspiciously if I use field walk despite not being an adventurer.
While there's the option of passing myself off as an adventurer, one look at the intelligence card will expose the lie.

I teleported to the inside of the adventurer's guild.
A place without tumult and having a calm atmosphere is comforting.
Transferring in an instant from a lonely battlefield into this atmosphere further enhances it's value.
"Is there anyone who wants to go to the capital?"
A person who teleported through the wall like me was recruiting customers when I exited the guild.

The capital, is it?
Should I give it a go?
The recruiter is quite the beauty too.

"How much will it cost?"
I tried asking after activating thirty percent discount.
She's an adventurer in her fourties.
However, she's an elf and to top it off, a female. (♀=female right?)

Appearance wise she looks around twenty years of age.
Let's ignore the age.

"The prevailing rate is two silver coins. A one way trip will cost you a non-bargainable amount of 1 silver coin."
"I see."
The 30% discount probably didn't work.
Taking out a pouch from my rucksack, I handed over a silver coin.

"If it's something to the extent of that rucksack it should be fine.(to transfer, I presume.) Responding to the faith of companions, I have read the honesty of their hearts, Party Formation"

The elven adventurer chanted the party formation spell.
The party formation prompt materialized in my head.
The prompt disappeared on selecting yes.

So that's how it is. This is how you form a party.

The party at the labyrinths entrance was formed in the same way.
Only the members of your own party can be transferred with teleport magic.

From her earlier words about a rucksack being fine, it seems not everything can be transported.
Is the rucksack treated as baggage?
Will the contents of my item box be fine?

Without giving me any time to placate my worries, the elf adventurer casts field walk.
The adventurer and the guild's wall in front of me faded to black.

This isn't the time to be perplexed.
Now that I think about it, the item box was fine when casting dungeon walk and warp. Field walk should be the same.
I follow along so as not to be late.

A large room expanded on the other side of the wall.
Since the basic structure is the same, this is probably the Capital's adventurer guild. It's dimensions were three times larger than it's

counterpart in Vale.
The counter also had up to 10 lines queued up.

Accompanying the invocation of the party formation spell, the disband party option materialized.
Another adventurer who came along with us nodded and left.
He formed a party with five other people, cast field walk and exited through the wall.

That must've been the his first time in Vale.
Thus, he came along with the Elven adventurer to Vale. Upon returning, he took along his party to Vale.

"Come to think of it, the other day, a magician was using field walk. How is that possible? "
Since it's a rare opportunity, might as well ask the elven female.

"Who knows. I've never heard of such a thing. Might you not have made a mistake?"
"Is that so? That might just be it."
"Then, I'll take my leave."
The elf woman also departed.
As expected a magician able to use warp or dungeon walk is unheard of.
Moreover, the reply had a meh feeling to it. People probably don't have any particular interest in details of skills or jobs of other people.

If I were good-looking, would she have had sex with me?
Damn it. Is that the way it is?

I exited the adventurer's guild for a while.

The capital was crowded with buildings.
The color of the building's brick's here was brown too.
Not being modern buildings enhances their oppressive feeling.

Kinda feels like getting lost in ancient Rome or Baghdad in it's golden days.
Should be obvious that I've never seen them. But the setting should be somewhat like this.

The road in front of me, stretches far and wide straight out in the distance.
A history book I read in my free time described the construction of roads in the Middle Ages to be complicated so as to make them impervious to enemy attack.
The path to the capital is straight on the other hand. Is it peaceful to this extent?

The day is still young.
There seems to be a time difference between here and Vale.

Since I didn't exactly come here for sightseeing, I swiftly returned to the adventurers guild.
There was a board to my left side on which posters were displayed.

I approached the board, but as expected, I couldn't read it.
When I started looking around restlessly, a beautiful onee-san smilingly approached me.

"Should I read it for you?"
As expected of the capital's guild.
The translators are of a different level entirely. They're elegant and refined.
She's a 21 year old villager. Though she isn't as beautiful as Roxanne and is simply wearing loose deep blue clothes, she has a dazzling atmosphere around her.

"Yes."
"It's 10 Nars for six minutes."
The price seems to the same as at Vale's explorer's guild.
Opening the rucksack, I handed over 10 copper coins to the woman.
When our finger tips touched during the exchange, I felt my heart skip a beat. Can't be helped, I'm a man after all.

"Please proceed."
"Then, you have until till this hourglass runs out."
The hourglasses working seems identical.
A perfectly legal chance to ogle her butt GET!

Be that as it may, it's not like I can ogle her forever.
Dammit. Since I'm being charged for this time.

“Is there a place which purchases branches?”
“Um , did you just become an adventurer? ”
That was probably a noob question just now.
Though I’m not really an adventurer.

“Why do you ask? ”
“Requests specify specific items. They’re either strong monster or rare item drops. The guild has tons of branches stocked. That being the case, there’s no need to put out a request for it”
When I countered with a question of my own, she kindly explained it to me.
So that’s how it is.
There’s no way anyone will put out a request to purchase branches. To search for it regardless would be the epitome of noobness.

“Then thread is also a no go?”
“Yep.”
“No places willing to purchase antidotes either? ”
Once over the border one may do anything (implying he can be as shameless in his questioning as he wants since nobody knows him anyways.)
Since I’ve been found out to be a newbie anyways, might as well ask about everything.

“Since you can buy them at guilds anyways.”
“Can you sell stuff like wands at guilds too? ”
“Items droppped by monsters, be they equipment or rotting ingredients, cannot be sold at the guild. Equipment can be sold to arms merchants while you can sell the ingredients to restaurants or use them for food yourself or sell them on the festival day. The ingredients won’t rot if you place the ingredients in the item box anyways so.”
They won’t rot when inside the item box?
This is good info.

“What about monster subjugation requests? ”
“Monster subjugation is carried out by the lord’s knight and warrior squadron. Though there are instances of adventurer’s are recruited in the Knight’s squadron. Should I read out the details for you?”
If it’s about the income earned by monster subjugation, the slave trader should have told me all there is to know.
It seems they don’t give much to people of doubtful origin.

“Nope. Are there any one-off jobs? ”
“There’s a job to guide people around with field walk”
That’s also impossible since I’m unfamiliar to towns other than the capital and Vale..
In the first place, my ability isn’t field walk, it’s warp. There’s also the question of how long I can keep fooling them (into thinking it’s field walk).

Since there was no other option, I had her teach me the items for which requests were put out.
Clear tortoise shell, reverse scales, shielding cement and silver thread.
Shark fins and sirloins are the rare ingredients. There are items like that too?

“Your time is up. Do you want to continue?”
“Nope. This is good enough. Thank you”
Rather than an extension, I want the after.(he’s prob referring to sex)

So far as selling of your items is concerned, I think Krater’s explorer’s guild put up a wide variety of requests. “Krater’s explorer’s guild, is it. I understand”
Not really.
More like, this is the first time I’m hearing that name.

I bid farewell to the onee-san who went out of her way to teach me.
After that I made a few transactions at the counter.

“How much is your cheapest fatigue recovery potion?”
Since this is a rare chance, I tried asking the onee-san manning the counter.

“Strengthening pill, right? It’s sixty Nars. ”
“What about the cheapest potion?”
“The nourishment pill. That too, is for 60 Nars.
Pretty expensive.
If I carelessly use them instead of Durandal(‘s recovery ability), my expenses will go into the red pretty quick.
In the end, I returned to Vale’s adventurers guild without purchasing anything.

Making sure of the absence of people in my surroundings, I sleepily muttered “Field Walk”.
Though I had heard the chant for Field walk before, I wasn’t able to

memorize it.
And then I cast warp silently. I visualized Vale's adventurer guilds wall.

I entered the black wall which had materialized.
Thus from an outsiders perspective, I seem to be using field walk to teleport myself.

After an instant of darkness, I came out into Vale's adventurer's guild.
It's evening over here.
Seems like the capital is to the west of Vale.

Incidentally, the threads price was 10 Nars.
Even though the green caterpillar took the trouble to spit out all that thread, it didn't raise as much money as the needlewood's drops Wasn't a rare item either.
Certainly, it's not a great combination of monsters.

Today's earnings amount to 1144 Nars.
It doesn't seem to be a miscalculation. It's only one-fourth of yesterday's earnings.

But I didn't craft medicine today and four leaf's are in my item box so.
With four leaves, I can make around 40 antidote pills. That'll earn me around 1000 Nars so the actual deficit is half that of yesterday.

My spending the day learning how to use magic is to blame.
Exploring also took a lot more time since I wasn't utilizing Durandal.

I returned to Vale's restaurant.

"For three days, please."
I tell the man as I'm taking out my purse.
The amount I had paid on the first day was enough for lodging till this morning.

"Got it."
"Isn't there a money changer somewhere? Copper coins have been piling up."
"There is no such place. It's not like you have particularly have to pay in silver. Paying with 100 copper coins is perfectly acceptable"

Apparently there are no money changers.
If there was a moneylender, with 30% discount I'd be able to buy a gold coin for 7000 Nars and selling the same with 30% sales boost would yield 13000 Nars. I'd make a killing.

If you take that into consideration, exchanging 1 gold for a hundred silver would become a pretty lucrative business.
But since the changer would charge a commission of the total, earning money by this means is impractical.

I placed five silver coins and 190 copper coins on the counter.
With this, the no of copper coins has been considerably reduced.

"Also, please prepare a hot bath after dinner."

"Let's see. Hotel charges with dinner included and hot water for three days, 686 Nars'll be good enough. This is a special service just for you."
For some reason, he returned six copper coins to me.
Since the hot water bath was twenty Nars, this means the thirty percent discount is effective?
I don't get the working of this thing.

"Can I inspect my intelligence card?"
"You can do it once every ten days. Since you checked it two days ago, you'll have to wait a while."
"I already ordered food right?"
"Yep. You did."
I utilize dinner time to study the numbers of this world's language.
I learned 1 yesterday.
What should I choose today.

"Welcome. Since fresh sirloin arrived today, I'd recommend that."
Upon entering the restaurant, a woman from the management recommended one of the four things on the menu.
Seems to be the same sirloins which I heard about in the capital.
It's a bit on the small side for a meal of one, but a steak is also included. So this is a sirloin.

"……then, for one person." "Thank you for your patronage."
Seeing it has made me want to eat it.
I've lost.

“The third, please.”

Today I’ll learn number 3.

“Certainly. Would herbal tea suffice as a drink?”
All right. It’s the correct answer.
With this I’ve identified the numbers 1 and 3 of the key used to unlock my room. -review

Since there are four dinner menus,the remaining two are 2 and 4.
How can I confirm it?
I’ll work out a strategy while eating dinner.

Absentmindedly thinking about it is escapism.
I know that.
As a matter of fact, there is a bigger problem.
Considering that is actually more important.

Today’s total proceeds were 3302 Nars. That includes the price of yesterday’s share of leaves.
Upon considering today’s share of leaves was the same as yesterday. Since I was only wandering aimlessly around the second floor, it cant be helped that the result is not much different from yesterday.
Like it or not, I’m still far from earning a gold coin.

Out of 10 days, three have already passed.
Will I be able to raise the money by the due date?

To be honest, at this pace, it’s gonna be pretty tough.

The labyrinth doesn’t seem to have treasure chests and the like either.
Will there be any if I go to the lower floors? Or maybe they’re hidden so I don’t notice them. Or is it that they’re not there in the first place? I considered many possibilities.

In the first place, is a bonanza really possible in a labyrinth?
Even if possible, it’ll be worthless if not within 10 days.
It’ll be a race with time from here onwards.

Kaga Michio: Male, 17 years old

Explorer Lv.21, Hero Lv.17, Wizard Lv.19

Equipment: Scimitar, Hide Armour, Sandal Boots.

My level rising is the sole saving grace.
I heaved a sigh while looking at my arm.

Chapter 23 - Red Light

The next labyrinth exploration will start in a small room in the middle of the second level where many monsters wouldn't appear.
It's doubtful whether I'd be able to earn the money for Roxanne by locking myself into the dungeon, but since it's late at night there isn't anything else to do.
I exited the hotel and immediately warped to the labyrinth using the wall next to the entrance way.
Finally, I made good progress on the exploration of the second level.
As soon as I entered the labyrinth, I came across a small room that should be next to the boss room.
Perhaps because it's late at night, there aren't any people waiting for their turn.

When fighting the boss, I think I should use Durandal.
I took out Durandal, replaced "Mp recovery rate x5" with a fifth job, and approached the room in the back.
My equipped jobs are Warrior and Swordsman.
If I only equipped three jobs, I could equip "10x decease in required exp tnl", but I gave up on it.
Because it's a boss battle, it's better to focus on safety than the experience value.
Magic or Rush might be useful for something.

The back door immediately opened.
I braced myself and entered the neighboring room.
Smoke gathered and a demon appeared.
White Caterpillar Lv 2
As the name suggests, it's a white species of green caterpillar. Just one size larger.
The first floor's Udo Wood was the same. I wonder if variants of the monsters that appear on the level become the boss?
While I was thinking, an orange magic formation appeared underneath the caterpillar's chest.
Crap. It's going to spit out thread.
Since it's a different type of demon from the Green Caterpillar, it might have a different special attack, but it's likely going to spit something out of its mouth since it's a similar caterpillar.
While watching the demon's mouth, I prepared my firewall.

White Caterpillar has used String Shot.(TN: lit. spit out string) It's still just string.
Immediately after the caterpillar spit out its string, I created a wall of fire in front.
The string that was supposed to cover me was burned in the fire wall.
The sound of burning string echoed faintly.
Magic was already useful.
If I switched out the third job, Wizard, for Warrior, what would have happened?

I moved to the side and attacked using Durandal.
Even with pursuing with Rush, another magic formation appeared.
I take a step back and prepare my fire wall while watching the demon's movements.
Stupid. How many times is it going to repeat the same actions?

Though, I am just one person.
Because it's a boss battle, it'll probably become a drawn out battle.
The enemy's aim is to spit out thread and seal my movements, which is a good strategy.
Conversely, it would be terrible for me if I got constricted.
I'd likely be bashed, if I was unable to move satisfactorily.
I'll defeat it before that happens.
I moved to the side and swung Durandal.
With my sword overhead, I used Rush and slashed at the monster.
Durandal struck against the monster's head.

It hasn't died, yet?
As expected, is it because the boss is lv 2?

It pulls back at once, and a magic formation can be observed at its feet.
However, the White Caterpillar tries to ram me instead of shooting its string.
I hurriedly tried to avoid it, but my right elbow got hit.
Enduring the pain, I swung Durandal through the monster's flank.
Finally, my sword tears through the monster. The White Caterpillar lay defeated.

Silk Thread
The demon disappears into smoke and only a shiny thread remains.
This thread might just be a luxury item.

The White Caterpillar seemed to be quite intelligent.
It first carried out a strategy of trying to seal my movement and switched to direct attacks when it lost room.
Is it intelligent?
However, it's likely to be just a simple program.
It's difficult to understand with Durandal, but the Green Caterpillar might have a similar behavioral pattern.
Can you even call that intelligence?
Also, the special attack, which I nullified with the firewall, was done twice.
Or after using it twice, it realized it was useless and switched to physical attacks?

I looked around the room.
There is nothing in particular.
The party that passed through before me managed to avoid being destroyed.
I went into the next room and moved to the third floor.
The small room that is the entrance to the third floor is almost the same as on the first and second floors.
There is a black wall behind and the path extends in three directions.
The second floor's boss room had a shortcut back to the entrance, after all.
The first floor was on the right and the second was in front.
Then, the third floor should be on the left.
With Durandal in hand, decided on three jobs and entered the left passageway.

Needle Wood Lv 3
The first monster that appeared was a Needle Wood.
Is the third floor level 3?
I rush over and throw out Durandal.
With Durandal, even a Lv 3 only takes a hit.
Assuming the level 3 monsters are stronger, because I've been raising my own level this much isn't a problem.

Kobold Lv 3
Next, a kobold appeared and seems to be the monster of the floor.
It's a dark blue midget. It has big eyes, pointed ears, and fangs sprouting up.
Its face is huge. It's two heads tall and its face is about half its body.
It has a knife in its right hand. Isn't that a weapon?
I'm afraid of the knife.
Although the damage from the monsters bash attacks disappeared from Durandal's HP Absorption, would cuts disappear as well?

It might be alright to be cut, but what about how I'm cut?
Losing an arm would be terrible, but a finger might be alright.
Or, if my organs were gouged out?
If a nerve is cut?
Is the lost blood replenished by the HP absorption?
These various questions made me anxious.
Of course, I don't want to try and see what happens.

The victory goes to the one who makes the first move against an enemy with a weapon.
I prepared Fireball.
A ball of fire appeared overhead.

Slow.

The movements of the kobold were sluggish.
It wasn't even able to take three steps till the ball of fire closed the distance.
The confused monster was caught in the fireball.
The kobold is wrapped in flames and collapsed.

Weak!
The kobold went under with a single Fire Ball
So weak. Kobolds are weak.
I thought one hit of Fireball wouldn't be enough.
In comparison, the Green Caterpillar Lv 2 took two hits and the Needle Wood Lv 2 took three.

Kobold Salt
When the kobold dissolved into smoke, it left behind a white fang.
White fang sounds nice, but isn't it just ordinary salt like the name suggests?
Since my level rose, I can afford to stick it into the item box.
I took out the item box while making sure no one was around.
Now, there are 33 gold coins and 21 silver coins put in the item box.
Putting it in my item box should be safer than the rucksack on my back.
Because it's troublesome to cast the spell in front of people, I might not be able to use the silver coins.
I want to think there isn't magic to steal the contents of my item box.

Before dealing with the enemies of the third floor, I thought I would need Durandal, but if these weak kobolds are the opponent, it won't be

necessary.
I put Durandal away.
I kept the third job and equipped 5x Mp recovery speed.

Green Caterpillar Lv 3
Kobold Lv 3
Next ones to come out were companions. That's convenient.
The same time I discovered them I cast Fire Storm. Sparks attacked the two monsters.
The kobold fell with that alone.
I threw a Fireball at the remaining Green Caterpillar.
The monster endured the inferno.
The level two caterpillar died with two shots, but that doesn't seem to be enough for a level 3.
As expected, it seems to get stronger from Lv 2 to 3.
I sent a third one to the approaching caterpillar.
If the first blow that attracted it wasn't Firestorm, I could have fired three shots with room to spare.
The Green Caterpillar falls. Leaving behind thread, it disappeared into smoke.

Kobolds are weak.
They're weaker than the caterpillars on the second floor.
It might be that I shoot strong magic, but even the knights and hotel guy, treated it as a disappointing monster.
Isn't it a monster for beginners that should normally appear on the first floor?
Although I don't know whether there is a reason it appeared on the lower floors, since it's so weak.
Because there isn't a reason for them to appear, there might be no reason.
The reality might be that.

And speaking of my limited experience, I think it's fine for kobolds to be on the third floor.
Even though kobolds have big blue face, it leaves a bad taste since they're similar to humans.
If you had a demon-like human in your party from the beginning, you might have lost your composure.
Needle Woods are clearly plants and Green Caterpillars are caterpillars.
Gradually you become accustomed to the difference, would they then be unable to cope with the kobolds?
Also, kobolds are holding knives.

When facing an enemy holding a knife, after all it will create a sense of fear.
Only after being gradually accustomed to the labyrinth, monsters, and leveling up, was I able to shake off that fear.
If kobolds were the first floor monsters, I don't know what would happen.
When the time came, I might have been fine.

Kobold Lv 3
It's also possible that the fire element is its weakness. Next, I tried using water magic to see.
But it only took a single hit with Water Ball as well.
Since they're so weak, the experience gain will be less as well.
There's a problem of efficiency.

Jackknife – One-handed Sword
When the kobold fell, it dropped the knife it was holding this time.
It seems to be a folding knife.
I feel frightened when an enemy holds it, but it is a small knife.
I put away the folded blade.

While fighting, kobolds would often drop the jackknife.
Needle woods' probability to drop the leaf is about a tenth and the jackknife's probability of dropping is a third.
It seems the probability of the item dropped depends upon the monster.
Green Caterpillars only leave behind thread.

I don't know how much the jackknife will sell for.
It shouldn't be too high.
It's just a common knife, as well as a drop from a kobold.
If drop item from a weak monster was worth a lot, it wouldn't be a disappointing monster.

It turned out as I thought when I went to the adventurers' guild.
After returning to the inn and eating breakfast, I went towards the adventurers' guild.

"Do you buy kobold salt?"
I tried to ask the older woman at the counter.

However, if you look at the items I come here to sell, the progress of my labyrinth exploration is leaked to the guild.
At present, I'm not particularly troubled by it.

“Yes, I can do it. Out of the items purchased by the guild, it has the lowest sale price.”
“Specifically?”
“Four nars for one.”
Cheap.
Upon seeing the depressed me, the woman smiled.
That smile’s priceless.

“Yeah.”
Since, there isn’t any use for it, all of the kobold salt was put on the tray.
If I sold it in units of five, I could gain a profit of 1 nar with the 30% discount, but still it’s only a nar.
I don’t have enough energy to do that.

“The guild also purchases jackknives.”
The guild woman told me.
Is my situation being leaked?
There might be many adventurers, who bring kobold salt and jackknives together.
“I’ve heard it’s worthless equipment.”
“Among equipment, I’m only allowed to handle jackknives. Because there are so many, they are melted down and used as an ingredient in copper coins.”
Jack Knifes are usually not brown but a silver color. I wonder if it’s made out of copper?

“By the way, the price is?”
“Ten nars for one.”
Cheap!
Well, they’re small, but even 100 or 200 copper coins could be made from a single jackknife.
Is the price really like that?

“I understand. 800 *mumbles* Item Box Open”
So the woman wouldn’t hear me, I pretended to turn to the side and cast the spell in a low voice.
Rather than the 800 coins, I’d like easy ways to make money.
I took out the jackknives and place them on the tray.
“Then, please wait a moment.”
After a little bit of time, the woman returned with 808 nars.
Is it really just 800?

As expected of their weakness, kobolds won't make me money.
Its three characteristics are being slow, weak, and cheap.
At the same time, a red light was lit on my ability to prepare the money to buy Roxanne.
I judge that it's impossible to acquire the funds for Roxanne from the dungeon.
It's obvious the main monster of third floor, kobolds, won't make money.
If you should say I should advance to the lower floor, it isn't that promising.
Though half of the third floor is kobolds, Needle Woods and Green Caterpillars show up also.
If the first floor's Needle Wood appeared on the third floor, the third floor's kobold should appear on the fourth and fifth floors.
Even if I cleared a floor every two days, I'd only advance to the sixth floor by the deadline.
And kobolds are certainly there to stand in my way.
It's hopeless to make easy money in the labyrinth.

There is the option of paying an explorer to take me deeper into the labyrinth.
However, even if I went to a lower floor, there isn't any guarantee I'll be able to earn enough money to buy Roxanne.
First, the expectation that you'll earn more money the deeper the floor level collapsed with the appearance of the kobold.
Second, when I think about the danger I can't just take a leap of faith.
Because the Green Caterpillar became stronger from level two to three, it's pretty much certain the monsters will get stronger the deeper I go.
I may lose my advantage in the fourth or fifth floors.
Third, as of three days ago the exploration only covered up to the fourth floor, so even if I advance, I would only be able to go that deep.
I better think of methods outside the labyrinth to make money.
I should concentrate my efforts on that.

I thought about a method using the leaf, but it's probably impossible.
Antidotes sell for 25 nars and ten would be 325 nars with the 30% increase in sale price.
The price of the leaf at the guild is 80 nars and the woman told me the market price is double the amount, so I can buy it for 160 nars. Since 10 antidotes are generated from one leaf, it becomes a profit of 165 nars.
If more than a hundred are collected in a day, it's easily possible to earn no less than a gold coin.

But from what I heard from the guild woman, it seems you can't buy the leaves at the guild.
Not only from the adventurers and explorers guild, it isn't possible to even put up a purchase request.
It seems they made a contract with the pharmacists' guild to send them medical ingredients.
And then, the pharmacist guild will distribute to its members.

So, it's worthless.
Even if I join some guild, I won't be distributed 100 items in one day.
If the herbalists were distributed 100 per day, every one of them would be rich.
Well even if I become a herbalist guild member and put out a purchase request, I lose control over the situation.
By creating barriers to enter, newcomers won't be able to profit.
The world is well-made.

It seems impossible to make money using the leaf.
If it's not possible to earn money using the labyrinth or leaf, what should be done?
The choice was there from the beginning.
It was bounty hunting.

In the morning, I decided to walk through Vale instead of entering the labyrinth.
I checked the job of everyone I saw.
Using judgment makes this so easy.
Because, I can tell who's a thief by looking at them.

Honestly, I'm not interested in bounty hunting.
I don't want to do it, but I have no doubt the judgment skill is a huge benefit in this business.

From those leaving the town, there weren't any thieves.
They don't seem to be walking downtown in the morning.
But what should I do if I find a thief?
I have some resistance to killing a person.
I've gotten accustomed to killing demon, but they only disappear into smoke and this is different.
Of course, I have to do it if I want the reward money.

I'll move to the slums in the north and look there.
The south and central parts of the city are lined with large, clean buildings, but the farther north you go, the buildings become worn down.
It smells of poverty.
I don't see any difference from the slums and here.

No……
I found out by taking one step inside.
It's clearly different.
From here on, it's the slums.

The smell is different.
The people are different.
The air is different.
The building got even dirtier and an oppressive air hung around the area.
There are even homeless people.
A child is standing in the street.
It isn't doing anything, looking at any place, just standing there blankly.
Rather than playing in the street, they're more like a kind of street child.

This place is horrible.
I may just think so because it's my first time, but my sixth sense is sounding the alarm bells.
This atmosphere is perilous.
It is absolutely dangerous.
An older guy, squatting alone in a convenience store parking lot, smoking, is adorable compared to here.
I turn right around and leave the slums.
I quickly took refuge in a place I considered safe.

I turn back a little and go around to the east side.
There seems to be a brothel in the east.
Although it's a brothel in the slums, it wouldn't be strange for a guy to exit.

On the way there, there was a crowd.
A lot of people were assembled on the street.
What's going on?
I joined the group as well while using judgment.
Why do I want to line up whenever I see a line?
People are lined up along the road.
There was a vacant lot across the road and someone lay fallen.

Leather Chest Armor
When I use judgment, instead of their name and job, it was their equipment.
…….In other words, they seem to be dead.
I can't appraise a dead body.

"That's a thief, right?
"Why do you think that?"
Within the left crown, an older adventurer and merchant were having a talk in the Brahim language.
"The left hand was cut off. It hasn't come out after 30 minutes."
I don't feel like seeing it, but it appears the fallen person has no left hand.
Was the intelligence card the mark?
Intelligence cards are naturally expunged thirty minutes after death.
I also thought it could be used to hide the victim's identity, but that probably goes without saying.

"Please let me through."
I think someone said. An order of knights arrived there.
A beautiful knight and an apprentice were there.
It seems the knights are tasked with maintaining public security.
"Is it a thief? You, take the corpse to the mortuary."
"Yes!"
The beautiful knight ordered after taking one glance at the corpse.
Even though it's a murder case, is that all you're going to do?
That's way too careless.
"It's a thief. Everyone dismissed."

The beautiful knight told the onlookers while raising and shaking her left hand.
The onlookers scattered, but a large amount returned.
Do they know the drill?
When the pretty knight left, the hustle and bustle returned to the noisy onlookers.
"Is it a bounty hunter?"
"I wonder. Oh, couldn't it be a falling out?"
The merchant and older adventurer resumed their conversation.

Even if a thief takes an intelligence card it can't be converted into money, and you need a story if you ask someone else.
If it's the homeless people in the slums, they would be glad to work with you.

“The thieves that were kicked out of town seem to have come back for revenge.”
While listening to the conversation of the merchants, I heard someone speaking in the back.

Chapter 24 - The Search for Thieves

The thieves that were kicked out of town seem to have come back for revenge.

It was information I just happened to overhear, but I couldn't throw it away. It seems the thieves, who attacked the village and were killed by me, were originally based in the slums of this town.

Would those thieves that were evicted from town be their companions?
If that's so, who is the other party they're getting revenge on?

I felt a chill.

Ok think calmly, the chances of me being their revenge target is small.

First, if this was the town they were expelled from, they would want revenge on the town.

Second, they had the tables turned on them because they attacked the village, so it would be unjustified resentment.

Third, it's hard to identify my face, since this world likely doesn't have photographs.

Although, it doesn't give me peace of mind.

Even if it's to get revenge for being driven out of town, I think it would be difficult if the knights were the other party.

Even if it's unjustified resentment, there's no reason to stop if the other side doesn't think so.

And if you get the information from the knight or the villagers, it's possible to arrive at me.

No matter what the thief's objectives are, I can't deny the possibility of being targeted.

Until the thieves that were kicked out of town are killed, I can't sleep without worries.(TLN: the original Japanese is 枕を高くしては寝られない which roughly translates to "can't sleep with a higher pillow" which refers to a saying that if you are expecting an attack to sleep with a shorter pillow so you can hear it coming)

Without any response from me, I hunted the thieves and was forced to receive the reward money.

That day I searched the town until the evening.

I didn't go into the slums.

I couldn't find any thieves, but I grasped the rough features of the town.

Because I have warp, it's important to know the terrain of the town.

I've found the reason the slums are in the north.

Two rivers flow through the town of Vale.
Both flow from the south and exit through the north.

There was also a well in the back of the inn and such around, so I'm not sure to what extent it's used for drinking water.
However, sewage is probably discharged into the river.

The water that flows into the city from the south is clean and becomes cloudier as it heads downstream.

When it arrives at the slums, it stinks.

No one wants to live is such a place.

In turn, the rich and powerful build their houses in the south.

The remaining north side in turn becomes slums.

I haven't seen any thieves, is it because I'm being too careful?

I don’t think humans that can use judgment often appear, but if you were in this town since the olden days, it might be known.

Or perhaps thieves are only active at night.

I may not be able to meet them unless I enter the deepest parts of the slums.

There’s the possibility they’re outside of town, too.

While thinking of various things, I arrived at the labyrinth.

“How far can you take me?”

I equip my discount and ask the explorer at the labyrinth’s entrance.

“Seven floors.”
“Can you take me to the fourth floor.”
“Ok.”

There isn’t any money in the third floor.

I should get him to take me to the lower floors.

Kobolds die in a single shot of magic, also they die with a single blow from durandal.

The entrance explorer disappears at midnight.

I should get him to take me along tonight.

“…….How much?”

I asked because the other side wasn’t saying anything.

“Pay the level of floor you want to go to in silver coins.”
“Understood.”

It’s an easy to understand pricing plan.

It might have been common sense.

I took four silver coins from the rucksack.

I can't cheat the item box spell in front of the professional.

The operation time might be weird.

When I passed over the coins, he took out his item box.

Oh.
It's that spell.

Now that I think about it, if I remove Incantation Omission, will I have to talk to finish?

Without Incantation Omission or Incantation Reduction, the correct spell and timing are needed to invoke magic.

The explorer cast the spell of party formation.

I selected "Yes" for the admission confirmation, and the explored entered the labyrinth.

I entered inside as well.

"This is the fourth floor."
"Eh?"

As soon as I entered , the explorer said that.

So suddenly, I couldn't even react.

Ahead of the wall I just passed through, was the labyrinth entrance.

A black wall behind and a small room with three paths extending to the left, right, and front.

It's very predictable.

“Party Released” comes to mind.

The explorer left through the wall behind the bewildered me.

Once you leave the entrance of the first floor, don’t you have to transfer using dungeon walk?

I thought that was the case.

The explorer didn’t cast anything, but I came here directly.

Incantation Omission?
I have no idea why.

Apparently, you can specify the designation when entering.

Or is it fraud?
Though always doing business in the labyrinth’s entrance, probably means it isn’t fraud.

Anyway, I took out durandal and advanced.

Mino Lv 4

There’s no doubt that it seems to be the fourth floor.

A level four monster appeared.

It’s a cow.

A brown buffalo.
However, it’s body isn’t that long and gives a kind of cramped feeling.

From its head, two horns extend.

It doesn’t have a single speck of adorableness.

The cow ferociously glared this way.

I'll try to shoot "Fireballs" at it.

The Mino was beginning to charge.

Because it didn't try to avoid it, the fireball hits it en route.

Although temporarily pressed back, it shook off the fire and started to charge again.

I sent the second shot.

The Mino was hit in the front again.

I wonder if it's resistant to fire.
Though that feeling isn't there.

But isn't it kind of stupid to keep charging?
Just straight at me.

It's not a wild boar damn it, it's a cow.

I prepared Durandal, and the Mino stopped right in front of my eyes.
I released the third shot.

Its horn was swung.
It seems I can't defeat it with three shots of "Fireball."

Even though I received it with the sword, it's power is considerable.
It would be a dangerous to be hit by that horn.

This is nothing but a bad situation.

I drove Durandal into it's torso.

Hide

All that remains is its hide.

I made sure there was no one around and put it away in my item box.

I got scared and reflexively used Durandal.

It's the fear that the monster will come and stab me with the horn.
This is scary.

It's because it has horns.

If it was something like human skin, wouldn't it pierce right through?

Even if you wear leather armor, it doesn't mean your whole body is covered.

I could counter the Mino's horn by getting the rank 5 or 6 full body armor, but it's a waste of points.

Incidentally, the foot armor rank 3, Boots of Acceleration, as the name suggest, have increased movement speed. I thought it would increase the rate at which I explored the dungeon, but it only becomes fast in a battle.

The equipment level 5, Fragarach, doesn't have MP absorption.

So, durandal must be out for MP recovery.

Surprisingly , the bonus equipment wasn't useful.

Though plate armor may be sold, given the difficulty of movement and heaviness of the armor, it isn't practical.

Given what I now know, the Green Caterpillar was great.

Even though it hurt, the ramming attack is just its body.

As for the Needle Wood, it just swings branches.

Branch arms.

Although the Kobolds' were also scary, kobolds were weak.

Even a single shot of magic was enough.

Now that I think about it, was it bad I abandoned leveling up on the third floor?

If the level 4 Mino could be defeated in three shots of magic, it wouldn't be a problem.

Or, since it's my first time seeing it, it's scary and is just a matter of getting used to it?

At any rate, there's no doubt this is the fourth floor.

The explorer didn't cast a spell.

If you choose which floor you want to go to when you enter the labyrinth, you should be able to go there.

Should I try and see?

Although I think it's bad to enter and immediately exit, I can't deal with the fourth floor.

I returned to the adventurers guild using warp and decided to do the experiment another day.

"After dinner, give me the hot water and lantern."
"Thank you for your patronage.
Hot water and a lantern, as a special service will be 21 nars."

I returned to the Vale Pavilion and received the key.
When I ordered it, I was told the price.

The hot water is 20 nars and I'm certain the rent for the lantern was supposed to be 10 nars.

For some reason the 30% discount worked.

It's my victory for consistently applying my discount skills.

Even though it won't change that hot water has been 20 nars, was there some change in the way he treats me.

I wonder if I'm treated as a regular customer from today on?

No.
There was only one time where hot water wasn't 20 nar.

It's the day I paid with the inn bill.

One item is 20 nar, though I wonder if the 30% discount applies to multiple items.

Hot water is 20 nar but with a lantern it's 21? I feel this is strange but pay gratefully nonetheless.

After, I confirmed the "2" character during dinner, wiped my body down with the hot water, and went outside with the lantern.

Already the sun is setting and it's growing dark.

The lantern doesn't burn brightly either.
It must be difficult to work with this light during the night.

It can't be compared with a fluorescent lamp.

It's only to the extent of being better than nothing.

It reminds me of the standing gas lamps during the Westernization movement of the Meiji period.

Even though a gas lamp can't be compared to a fluorescent light, I think this darkness belongs only to this lantern.

I walked while illuminating the area near my feet.

But while it's dark out, walking with a light is extremely noticeable.

Though there were few, now and then were people carrying lights, too.

There is light wherever someone is, so I know when to use judgment.
This is my limit with the judgment skill.

I can’t tell how many people are walking without a light

I used judgment at random but didn’t get a hit.

I walked towards the north.

I thought of asking the guy at the hotel if there was a bar somewhere, but decided not to do it.

If I enter a bar without the intention to drink alcohol, it’ll be exposed when I come back and receive the key.

The guy may know of a seedy bar, but may worry about losing a customer, but I want to go to a seedy bar.

It’s troublesome to ignore the recommendation to a safe bar.

As I was heading north, there was a brightly lit street.

Many adjoining buildings facing the street have their doors flung open.

It’s a brothel.

A woman is being displayed in a shop window, another woman on the first floor calls out to the man walking down the street, and the man chooses a woman.

It creates a very festive atmosphere.

It might just be festive compared to the night.

Or, possibly because I’m horny.

Yeah…..
I have no intention of entering.

Although I have no intention of entering, what I see is making my heart throb.

My heart is pounding.

Wait.

Calm down.

I need to think about this calmly.

There's also diseases.

There's the risk of being ripped off, too.

Not entering is the correct choice.

In the first place, I don't think they could compare to Roxanne's beauty.

Even if there was one, it wouldn't be picked for a first time customer.

Having decided not to enter, I gazed at the brothel calmly.

I hear the buzz of the brothel district.

It's kind of fun.

Though,……I can't understand the words.

From what I hear from the brothel, it probably a good thing I don't understand the language.

The women, guests, and pimps were all talking in a language other than Brahim.

I don't mind, since the hotel and guild speak it, but it seems many people don't speak Brahim.

It's the same as the first village.

The local language isn't Brahim.

The brothel will cater to the local population.

Somewhere out there, there may be a prostitute that understands Brahim.

I took in the atmosphere for a while from the street, then walked off.

Even though I can't understand the words, there is no reason to enter.

I'm considered an outsider and could get dragged into strange problems.

Since I'm not entering and only listening from the outside, I don't know how I appear to the surroundings.

Since there is light, there is the possibility of attracting attention.

Although, I wonder if there aren't many timid men who don't enter after coming in front of the brothel.

I kept with my wishful thinking, but it didn't change much.

After that, I wandered the town until the lantern's light ran out and then, warped back to the Vale Pavilion.

Because it's bad to come out the inner wall, I came out of the entrance outside wall.

I didn't see any adventurers use field walk in the town.

It might be bad manners to use it however they please.

Even if there wasn't privacy.

Since it's the middle of the night, it should be fine to transfer to the outside wall of the Vale Pavilion.

Returning to the inn, I gave back the lantern, went to my room, and slept.

I awoke in the middle of the night, left the key, and used warp to appear at the slums.

Success!
It's dark and I can't see anything, but this should be the place I came a while ago.

I think I see the brothel in that direction, but it seems to be closed.

Just in case, I used judgment.

Information for one person came to mind.

Seems like there is someone here.

Although I know from using it in the labyrinth, apparently judgment doesn't depend on the presence of light.

27-years old, Villager Woman

The other party is pretty.

In this darkness, the other side won't be able to see me.

What are you doing in such a place?

When I had that thought, it suddenly became bright around the corner of the road and out came a man with a torch.

There were three men.
The three of them were thieves.

It's the first time I found thieves in this town.

However, their level is low.
Every one of them was in the single digits.

Among the thieves that attacked the village, only two were worth money.

The Lv 19 was worth money but not the Lv 11, that might be the point.

If they're level isn't even in the double-digits, I think they're a bit half-baked as thieves.

The three people have begun to move separately while lighting up their surroundings.

Is it bad to be here?

When I was thinking about leaving with warp, I heard a sound from the other person.

The three men headed towards the noise.

The figure of the woman is lit up by the torches of the men.

The woman tried to rush away but tripped.

The thieves rushed at the woman.

She said some words I couldn't understand, while the men surrounded her.

One man kicked the woman's stomach.

"Stop at the face.
body, body"

Do you really have to say such a thing?

It's just that kind of feeling.

The three men beat the s*** out of her.

The woman tried to appeal, but was ignored.

Before long, a man grabbed her by the hair and dragged her away.

Four people went around the corner and disappeared.

Silence returned to the vicinity.

Since the thieves are gone, I'm not worried about being found here.

Although I'm no longer worried……

I saw something unpleasant.

Because it's unnatural for a young woman to be in such a place, I wonder if she wasn't a whore.

Were you trying to escape……..did you need to pull the tea…….were you trying for new clients?

It might be where thieves use violence as punishment.

Thieves certainly exist in this slum and seem to be responsible for the violence.

Chapter 25 - Shopping

I saw something unpleasant.
Three thieves using violence against a young woman.
This is the darker side of the world.
Can't the world just be full of beautiful things?

I don't want to get involved.
I turn my back on it and use warp on the wall nearby.

For now I've at least confirmed where the thieves come from.
I need to be cautious for now and leave.

I head for the third floor of the Labyrinth.

In the Labyrinth, violence is everything.
Only in the Labyrinth does violence solve every situation.

That makes it easy to understand.
You don't need to think about anything here. The strong win and the weak are destroyed.
How straightforward things are can feel relaxing.

I leave the third floor immediately.
I need to check if I can go straight to the third floor from outside the labyrinth.

Outside it is pitch dark and there isn't anyone.
I re-enter immediately.
As I enter I focus my mind on the third floor.

I appear in the small entrance room.
Since they all look the same I'm not sure which floor it is.

I take the copper sword and wand from the item box, and put away the scimitar.

Kobold Lv3

A Kobold Lv3 appears.
It seems I really am on the third floor.
I defeat the demon with a single fireball.

It seems you really can choose which floor you wish to go to as you enter the Labyrinth.

For now I'll hunt on the third floor.
The Mino on the fourth floor is still a bit scary.
That horn is dangerous.

It will probably be fine when I become more familiar with it, but until then it will be rather bad.

My current options are either going to the fourth floor using Durandal until I get used to it, or raising my level here.
Is it too soon to move on?
The horn on the Lv4 Mino will be a real threat until I can defeat it with just three spells.

I also found the thieves in the slums, so it's no longer necessary to hurry making money in the Labyrinth.
It's hard to make money on the third floor, but dangerous to move on.

After hunting some more and consuming MP I return the the small room at the entrance and pull out Durandal.
I want to test where I can go when I leave.
I step into the black wall and focus on the fourth floor, and then appear in a small entrance room.

Is it a success? Probably.
I head further into the Labyrinth.

Green Caterpillar Lv4

It's a success, it's possible to use the entrance to skip floors.
I charge in and swing Durandal.
The sword splits the Green Caterpillar in two.
A single blow on a Lv4.

Mino Lv4

Mino Lv4

Kobold Lv4

A group appears next. There's three of them.

Will group size increase as floors increase?
I can't be sure since I've only pushed through three floors, but I haven't encountered a group of three before.

Will I end up with a group of 20 on the 20th floor, and 30 on the 30th?
Hopefully that isn't the case.
I'm not sure how many floors there are but I'd be dead before the tenth.
At some stage there may be enemies that aren't affected by magic too.

A party size has a limit of six here, so I'd like to think there is a cap on the size of monster groups.

To start I use the sand storm.
The Mino might have a resistance to fire magic.
A storm of sand attacks the demons.

None of them were defeated though.
Even the kobolds are stronger, is a second spell necessary?

I tried to finish it quick and failed, so I'll need to be more cautious.
I use the sand storm again and this time the kobold is defeated.

There are 2 Mino's remaining.
One charges forward and I stab it with Durandal. The saint sword penetrates it easily.
The Mino becomes smoke and disappears.

At the same time the second Mino charges in and attacks with it's horn.
I hurry to avoid it but the horn grazes my arm.

AAAAAAAAhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!
DANGER!
It grazed me!

I madly swing Durandal around, and it lops off the Mino's head.
The demon becomes smoke and vanishes.

Hide.

It dropped hide.
That was dangerous.
Fighting in the Labyrinth is risking my life.
There's always the chance it could become fatal in an instant.

Did the two sand storms effect the Mino's?
They seemed scratched, but I'm not sure if it was much.
Maybe wind will be more effective.

The fourth floor is quite dangerous.
The danger of being hit by that horn is huge.
If there is just one I can handle it if I remain calm, but what would happen if I get surrounded?

Even if I don't come across a room full of demons, just running into three Mino's could be fatal.
I can't even imagine how bad it would be if I ran into four.

Should I retreat? Yes, retreat.
I decided to go back to the third floor.
It's a strategic retreat.
The third floor is better for now.

After that I continued to hunt on the third floor.
When I finally decided to leave the Labyrinth and went outside the morning sun had already risen.

Oops.
I wanted to warp back to town while it was still dark.

I wanted to check on the brothel again.
People should be walking around there again at this time and I wanted to mix in and go past.

Since I was wandering around with the lantern last night I probably went to sleep a bit later, so maybe I woke up a bit later too?
I probably went to the labyrinth later because of the trip to the slums.

Using Warp after it has become light stands out too much.
Well, I guess it can't be helped this time.

Today will be a busy day for the city.
After returning to the hotel, having breakfast, and having a short break in my room, I then walk around the city.

There are various kinds of things I'd like to buy.
First I looked around the cloths shops for a black mantle with a black hood that could hide my face.
If I want to hunt thieves at night without standing out then I'll need to wear something like that.

Are there a lot of people who wear mantles? I found them rather quickly.
It's in a cloths stall which is right in front of the hotel.
There's a lot of cloths neatly folded and on display.

I have a feeling the price might be a bit high.
Maybe it's classified as a high quality item here?

"How much is this?"

I asked the shop owner.

"It's 4,000 nars."

It seems high.
A day's income in that Labyrinth would totally disappear.

"Really?"
"The cloak is a fine article that uses flannel."

So it's not a mantle, it's a cloak?
Even after the merchants recommendation I return the cloak.
It probably is fine quality, but I don't really need a fine quality item.

Off to the side there are some green dyed pants.
It seems to be soft material that might be usable as underwear.
It has a drawstring to close it, so it probably is this worlds underwear.

"How much is this?"
"40 nars."
"I'll take two thanks."

Now I have some cloths to change into.
It might be expensive, but my sense of value was based on it being 1/100th of the price of the cloak.

"Thank you, that will be 56 nars."

The 30% discount works.
I pull out 56 copper coins to pay, and put the underwear away in the rucksack.

It seemed like the discount didn't apply when I was just asking about one item, but then it worked when I bought two.
The same thing seemed to happen with the hot water in the Vale Pavilion.
Maybe the discount doesn't work on single items?
I'll try it.

I head over to the armor merchants shop.
It's the same armor merchant I was at 5 days ago. I sold multiple items and the 30% bonus seemed to work.
Things might be different buying than selling though.

"Hello, Can I help you?"
"I'm looking for a gauntlet."

When I'm defending against an attack with my sword or wand it will be easy for my fingers to be injured.
It's questionable whether HP absorption can replace a severed finger.
I should equip something on my hands.

“Here.”

The armor merchant guides me to a place with a lot of gauntlets made of iron are lined up.
I’d prefer one with high defense, but the price for that probably isn’t good.

Leather Mittens.

This seems to be the cheapest.
It seems like the gear I used for Kendo.
It only covers as far as the wrist though, and the upper arm is still exposed.

“How much for these Leather Mittens?”
“80 nars.”

Is that good?
I don’t really know.

“How about these Leather Gloves?”
“Those are 120 nars.”

So the Leather MIttens are the cheapest.
The difference between the mittens and the gloves is, the gloves have all fingers properly made, but the mittens just have a thumb and two divisions for fingers.

The mittens should be similar in convenience to the gauntlets for Kendo, so they should be fine for using the wand and Durandal.

Leather mitten: empty skill slot.

“Can I buy this?”

I looked for one with an empty skill slot and presented it to the armor merchant.

“Sure.”

It doesn’t seem like the discount works on the single item. Two or more items mush have to be bought or sold for benefits.

I hand over 80 copper coins and obtain the Leather mittens.

After that I bought two pairs of socks, two washcloths, a hooded cloak, a small and medium wooden tub, two ropes, and a candle.
The small tub can be used as a cup, and the spare rope is for laundry. The medium tub, spare washcloth and candle were things I grabbed in case I needed them.
The small candle was 10 nars. I'm not sure how long it would last but I don't think it could replace borrowing the lantern.

The cloak with the hood was a bit worn, but found rather quickly.
It can hide the face quite well because it's a big hood.
I could not find soap, toothpaste, or a toothbrush.

It's starting to become evening when I finish shopping and return to the hotel.

"I'll have another nights stay with dinner, and order some hot water for after dinner."

I speak to the hotel man.
If I ask like this the hot water should be discounted as well.

I could have dinner somewhere else, but this is convenient and the rate of payment feels advantageous.

Or maybe not?
For a guest who goes to the Labyrinth, you never know when he might die.
After paying for a day, you might die in a ditch somewhere.
Maybe people don't normally pay days in advance?
Maybe some classes don't have enough money for a night?

Nobody knows when I'll die in this world.

"238 nars is fine since you're a regular customer."
"Thank you."

I was starting to think about something unpleasant, but I shake off the thoughts.
I pass over 2 sliver coins and 38 copper coins and receive the key to room

311.
I take my luggage to the room before the meal.

Since I am staying at the hotel I've only grabbed the bare necessities, but what would I need to settle down in this world?

That night I decided to start exploring the fourth floor.
My Wizard job had reached level 21 and I wanted to test how much magic was needed to defeat a Mino.
After having a quick look in the slums I headed straight for the fourth floor.

Kaga Michio: 17 year old male. Wizard Lv 21, Hero Lv19, Explorer Lv 22, Merchant Lv1, Herbalist Lv1.
Equipment: Sandals, Leather Mittens, Leather Armor, Durandal.

It will be different this time.
First of all I put Wizard in the first job position.

There may be no difference if it's third, but I don't know for sure.
While fighting with magic it may be best to make it first.
It seemed that I couldn't move explorer while there was something in the item box so I had to unload it onto the bed.

I stopped using 10x decrease in required experience til next level and equipped a fifth job.
Merchant and Herbalist have the effects of a small increase in Intellect so they were set as the fourth and fifth job.
The stat related to magic is probably Intellect.
Magic damage may go up if I increase my Intellect.
The effect might be small since I haven't raised those levels.

I want to use the additional offensive power of the wand, but I use Durandal instead for safety.

Mino Lv4

Needle Wood Lv4

Since a group of two appeared straight away I quickly used Fire Storm.
I used a second and third shot as soon as the fire went out.

The Mino approaches.
It's movement appears to be faster than the Needle Wood.
I blocked a thrust from it's horn with Durandal.
Neither enemy is defeated in the three shots.

I dodge another strike from the horn.
The Needle Wood catches up.
I'm struck with a branch while paying attention to the Needle Wood.
It's painful but couldn't be avoided.

I use a fourth fire storm.
Sparks attacked the two demons.
While I'm being cautious of the Mino's horn it collapses.
The Needle Wood collapses at the same time too.

Hide.

Branch.

Four spells.
It's the first time I've defeated a Mino Lv4 and a Needle Wood Lv4 so I'm not sure how effective my changes were.
It will probably be dangerous to fight on the fourth floor while I can't defeat things with just three spells.

I put the Hide & Branch into the item box and warp back to the third floor.

Chapter 26 – Rain

After hunting in the third floor of the labyrinth, I went out. It was still pitch black outside.
Because yesterday I left past sunrise, I reacted by being too careful this time.
I'll take a look at level 4 once.
I can't hunt for a very long time. Fighting with magic consumes MP and then using Durandal afterwards recovers MP.
On level 4, it is a good idea to pull out Durandal from the beginning.
[Explorer] leveled up to Lv23, so I might be able to defeat a Mino.

Because it reached Lv23, if placed as the first job, I will have more bonus points.
However by removing [Warp] and [Job Setting], I can add [Required Experience 1/10].
To put [Explorer] as the primary job, I need to empty the item box first.
I would prefer not to remove the item box's contents in this place.
It was a mistake making [Wizard] the first job.

Mino Lv4

I launched a [Fireball] at the Mino that appeared.
I cast as soon as I encountered it, as expected it couldn't avoid it.
I fired three shots before approaching it.

The Mino endured all three shots. It raised its horns and charged.
I received it with Durandal. I am pushed back for a moment with brute force.
I took a step back and cast a fourth [Fireball].

I swung Durandal and it clashed with the Mino's horn.
The fourth [Fireball] hit the Mino.
The Mino dies engulfed in flames.

Does it still take four magic shots?

Mino Lv4

On the next Mino I will not use magic, I will only use Durandal.
Thrusting the sword at Mino from the front, I slashed downward with Durandal, but the Mino didn't fall.

I haven't taken down a Mino yet using only Durandal, without resorting to magic.
It seems not to go down with one blow.

It strikes with its horns.
I flipped to the side and strike the cow's head.
The Mino is defeated.

When I'm calm and careful, I can deal with the Mino's horns.
Or am I getting a little used to this?

Although, when I'm surrounded by many of them, it is scary.
I still need to keep leveling up.

After hunting twice, I went outside again.
I felt somewhat cheerful.
It's almost dawn.

It will be bad if I am seen by anyone, so I return to the Labyrinth once more and use [Warp] to travel.

I pass through the black wall of [Warp].
The place where I came out, was pitch black. Probably because of the shadow cast by the building.
If successful, I should have appeared inside the Brothel District.

I wait a bit for the sun to rise.
It did not become very bright.
When I surveyed my surroundings, I found a brighter corner.
Is east over there?

When I look towards the East, it appears to be cloudy.
It is not very bright because of the clouds.

I look towards the West.
Stars that I expected to see, are not visible.

I did not notice that the whole sky is cloudy.
Because I don't see stars in Tokyo even when the sky is clear, I don't feel any discomfort.

When I think about it, it's always been sunny ever since I come to this world.
Naturally in this world there will be cloudy days and rainy days too.

What shall I do about an umbrella?
Yesterday in the city I did not see any umbrellas.
I don't think it will rain inside the Labyrinth.

When thinking about this and that, a person has come out from the Brothel.
Because it is still dark he had a lantern.
His job is [Villager]. Is he a guest?
When the man left the Brothel, he walked across to the other side.

After all the light still stands out.
Though I can't see the face, there is obviously someone there.
Because there isn't much light, it's better not to move around.

After some time, the surroundings got slightly brighter.
After all it is cloudy.

It would look strange if I am here for too long.
I left the place and walked along the road.

I was behind cover at the far back of the street where the brothel building stood.
I have not actually been here before. I just peeped from the other side of the road.
Seems there is no limitation to [Warp], even just by looking.
[Warp] seems to be able to go to any place I have seen.

Little by little people are leaving the Brothel and walking down the road.
I go across the brothel road and mix in among them.

I also check the other side of the corner, where the thieves came out previously.
There was a house in the short alley.

It does not seem to be a brothel.
Is the house a hideout for thieves? Seems like the office of a crime syndicate.
Looking at it strangely is not a good idea, so I walk past it quickly.
It's a two story building, neither luxurious nor worn-out, just an ordinary one.
If they barricaded inside there, it would be difficult to handle them.

The Brothel zone also looks like an ordinary street in the morning.
It does not have the atmosphere of the Slums.
Average customers would not come near it, if it exuded such an atmosphere.

I make my way back to the Inn.

On the way back, I pass by the Slave Traders.
I wonder if Roxanne is still sleeping?

"It has become clouded"

I enter the Inn and talk with the Innkeeper while receiving the room key.

"Around here although it seldom rains, when it does rain, it continues to rain. It can rain for several days"
"Is that so?"
"Probably"

I don't want it to rain much.
There are no umbrellas.

"It is time for breakfast, is that OK?"
"Yes it's OK"

However my wish was futile, while I was eating breakfast the rain continued.
It isn't full scale downpour, but a gentle rain.

I look outside the Inn, not a single person walking down the street had an umbrella up.
Are there no umbrellas in this world?

Most people only put on a cloak.
Some of them running around look no different than usual in appearance.

Yesterday I bought a similar cloak to theirs.
That seems to be this world's rain gear.
That explains why I found it immediately.

I bought it without being aware it was rain gear, how lucky.
I can go out of the Inn with this.

After I rested, I wore the cloak and ran to the adventurer guild.
Though not a full scale downpour, there are many scattered showers, rather than small sprinkles.
Will it continue raining like this?

I guess I'll stop searching for the thieves while it's raining.
There seems to be water-repellent coating done to the cloak, but it is still cloth after all. It will soak if I walk about in the rain.
Even the thieves will not go out in the rain very often.

I warp to the Labyrinth from the wall in the Adventurer's Guild.
Fortunately it does not rain inside the Labyrinth.
Even though I say fortunately, naturally that is the case.

In the end it continued to rain for two days.

"The rain has become weak. It will likely stop soon."

The Innkeeper told me that in the morning, two days after it started raining.

"Is that so? Then I can't go out yet"
"Indeed"

After I ran back in the rain from the Adventurer's Guild, the Innkeeper gave me the key.

If I warp to the inner wall of the Inn, I will not get any rain on me but…
If they checked my intelligence card, it will be found out that I'm not an adventurer.
Is there a better way?

“On top of that several days ago there was a murder, I should refrain from going out”

I use the opportunity to gather information.

“That event? In this Inn there is no danger. It is safe as long as you don’t go to the Slums or Brothel.”
“I understand why”

He seem to have some information.

“That’s because it’s a power struggle between the thieves hanging out in the slums of this town”
“Power struggle right”
“Just between us, some of the thieves are connected to the Knights Order”

The Innkeeper lowers his voice.

“Oh”
“I don’t know how they did it. Possibly one of the thieves’ sides leaked the information. Because of that a while ago, the Knights Order moved in and purged the remaining thieves. I heard that the thieves who were driven out of town and attacked a village were beaten.
“I see”

Are they the thieves I defeated?

“The one murdered a few days ago, was one of the thieves who remained in town. Rumor has it that not all of them were driven out or annihilated, some of them still remain”
“They are hiding somewhere”
“I wonder. While the slums are somewhat disorderly, they will not cause trouble in broad daylight downtown under the eyes of the knights. In this area it’s safe”

The Innkeeper procures information mainly related to the safety of the Inn and its visitors.
Would he even know the whereabouts of the thieves?

“Understood. Is it time for breakfast?”
“Yes, go ahead”

I managed to get the main outline from the Inn’s conversation.
Seems there are thieves in the slums and also driven out thieves.
Of course I will aim for driven out of town thieves.

Because there is a possibility that I am resented by the driven out thieves, dealing with this should be the right way.

It may be difficult to attack the barricaded base.
In the brothel district that building is the town’s remaining thieves’ base, it is hard to get in there.

Driven out thieves that are hidden somewhere, even if they are vigilant their defense would be insufficient.
After all they suffered the extermination plan from the Knights Order.

The other day late at night, the violence I saw toward a woman by the thieves remaining in the town is not right, however I am not an ally of justice who will drive them out.
They are members of the ones that attacked the village.
They are badgers of the same hole.

After breakfast I return to my room, through the slightly opened wooden window I was idly watching for the rain to stop.
Rain did not stop falling.
As expected it’s been raining continuously for more than two days.
Even if it becomes a drizzle, it still persists.

The rain stopped around midday.
Like this it is fine to enter the Labyrinth.
Because [Wizard] reached Lv24, I can now defeat the Mino with three magic attacks so I can advance to exploring level 4.
As I have walked around quite a bit, shouldn’t I find the boss room soon?

It took a considerable amount of time before I was able to defeat Mino.
If I seriously explored from the beginning I might have already cleared level 3.
The 4 silver paid to an Explorer to enter level 4 was wasteful.

Because the rain stopped, I left the Inn.
First I went to the Adventurer's Guild to sell items.
The Adventurer's Guild seems to be opened 24 hours because adventurers use the wall, but the counter is only opened during daytime.

"Give me nourishment pills and strengthening pills, 2 of each"

I requested to the woman in her 30's who returned with my payment, after applying the [30% Discount] skill.
I think just in case I should have recovery means other than Durandal.
While currently fighting in the Labyrinth it is unnecessary, but I can't be sure what can happen when facing thieves.

Just to make sure [Discount] skill applied.
When buying anti-hardness and anti-paralysis pills, the discount did not work.
Most likely it will not take effect this time also.

But you never know when by some chance it might work.
Like the time when I asked for hot water and lantern together.

Come to think of it, only that time when buying several medicines from her the discount was not effective.
I wonder why it did not work only that time.
Is it not effective when buying multiple things?

The woman in her 30's left once and come back with the pills.
They are blue pills and red pills.
When examining, blue one is nourishment pill and red pill is the strengthening one.
I reached a point where I can differentiate them by the colour.

"Thank you very much. That will be 60 Nars each."
"Yea"

After all 30% discount is not in effect.

"…… I'm sorry, can you pay in copper coins?"

She said while I was taking out 2 silver coins and 40 copper coins.
Why?
Is it the custom to pay with copper coins for nourishment and strengthening pills?

“Sorry”

Because it can’t be helped I take out copper coins from the pouch.

“Thank you very much. I have received the payment successfully.”

The woman in her 30’s, in exchange for 60 copper coins gave me a single pill.
One by one, as if to confirm, she split them.

Possibly she cannot calculate 60 x 4 = 240.
Or she thinks it can’t be done that way. If you understand how much 240 Nars is, you can subtract two silver coins from the 240 Nars.
I don’t understand this world’s education level. Because of the existence of reading proxy people, it seems the literacy rate wouldn’t be high.
There is also a merchant skill called [Calc] for performing calculations.
Come to think of it, if you aren’t a merchant, just ordinary villagers might not be able to calculate at all.
If they can’t calculate, so there cannot be a 30% discount.
However, 30% sale price increase works at the Guild.
Why does it work when selling?

“Who does the calculations for items the guild buys?”

I asked the woman who is around her 30s.

“It is done when sent to the Guild Temple. I think I saw it at the time of job changing”
“……”

It is embarrassing seeing that said.
It appears that they think I am an adventurer.
Well, I have come out many times from the wall in to the Adventurer’s Guild with [Warp] which is like [Field Walk].

“At that time broken items are rejected. Things such as Kobold Salt will dissolve in the rain if not put in Item Box. Because you can’t sell them please be careful”
“I understand”

Luckily, the woman in her 30’s, who didn’t reply back, didn’t find it strange.
She even explained another thing.
Kobold salt can’t be cut in two to get 2 of them.

I receive the pills and left the Adventurer’s Guild.

Money total calculations from guild purchases are not done by around 30’s woman.
Perhaps, if she does it then 30% price increase will never work.

Let’s go by this theory.
The [Sale Price Increase] and [Discount] skills don’t work with her.
If calculations can’t be done, then can’t raise or lower value by 30%.

Then on the other hand, why is it effective on other people?

[Calc].
The existence of the skill stands out.

It seems not just merchants but weapons dealers, armour dealers, also slave traders have [Calc] skill.
In regards to Inn I don’t understand.
Professions like merchant can’t do the job if they can’t do calculations.

Would it be because [Sale Price Increase] and [Discount] skills affect this [Calc]?
[Calc] is a skill that calculates unconsciously and displays the answer in one’s mind.
When calculating it should always be used.
I think when merchants calculate selling and buying price, my [Sale Price Increase] and [Discount] skill activate at the same time and they take the automatically calculated value given by the [Calc] skill.

If that’s the case, it makes sense it’s only effective when trading several things.

Because it is not necessary to calculate when buying and selling single goods.

Well, it is just one hypothesis.
It's just one, but I think its close enough.
When I finished my hypothesis, I switched my mind and concentrated on the search.

I wonder around in the city looking for thieves.
More than two days raining spent pointlessly, it is too late to get them back.
There's no time left until the deadline.

I can appraise all the people walking down the road.
Even places with a single person, I appraise without exceptions. Even if I can see it or not.
I could appraise even if I couldn't see clearly what was on the other side of a wooden window.
In the case there is a wall, as one could expect, I was unable to appraise inside a building.

The slums are dangerous and so, I can't enter it saying it'll be easy.
I made up my mind and enter.

I went in.
When I enter the Slums, I found a thief on the road.

Chapter 27 – Thief Extermination

There is a thief in the Slums.
I quickly go into cover and stealthily observe things.
I moved immediately after seeing him, I don't think anyone noticed me.

The thief is a 38 year old man, [Thief] Lv18.
Dressed in clothes that weren't exactly rags, he behaved like a homeless person.

But his behavior is unusual.
It can be understood while secretly observing.
The man was sometimes glancing in one direction.

Will a third party have the same feeling looking at the current me?
In my case, I'm hidden from sight while staring at him.

The thief is doing nothing but lying down on the road, but he frequently turns his body and each and every time gazes sharply in the same certain direction.
He is probably looking in that direction, at the building next to the Brothel where a thief came in and out.
I think he is scouting that place.

Are the thieves that stayed in town in that building, and the thieves who were expelled out searching for it?
I guess this man is with that gang.

Although it's a secret investigation, it doesn't look very skillful.
Speaking of that, won't he be easily found out?
Or will nobody take notice of something like a homeless guy?
I stay hidden and continue watching the thief.

A stake out seems like a test of the bladder.
The thief moved and the sensation from my bladder strengthened and I almost couldn't hold it.

The man stands up and comes over here.
Walks this way and passes by where I am hiding.

Going this way leads to exit of the Slums.
It's good that I did not have to go deeper inside.

Another person approaches him.
Just as one is passing the other, the thief knocked the person passing by off his feet.

I am puzzled by what suddenly happened.
Was the man who got hit, not very strong?

The thief didn't run away or check the result and casually walks away.
Was that possibly someone he knew?

The man who was hit, is lying face down on the road.
Besides, there does not seem anyone minding this.
Is that normal here?

Before I lose sight of the thief, I also move.
I follow from behind.

Looks like detective drama on TV.
I didn't think that I would mimic a detective in a different world.

I need to be cautious not to forget to check behind me and make sure I am not being followed.
While looking ahead I pay attention behind me.
This is quite difficult.

The thief while walking, also kept glancing back.
I occasionally change between thief's left side and back, I don't think he has noticed.

When he is worrying too much about behind him, his movements become unnatural.
The thief does not seem to be accustomed to this.
Because half the thieves group got destroyed, do they not have any talented people left?
Or because of the rain, was the thief in a hurry?
I'm lucky if he came to check the hideout in a hurry because the rain stopped.

The thief goes across the town of Vale and leaves through the south gate.
Outside the city walls there is a field, further outside there was a forest.

It's one thing with many people downtown, but it'd be impossible to continue to pursue outside the town.
Rice field plants are not tall. He would notice me immediately.
If I crawl he would probably not notice, but I would stand out for a different reason.
If an enemy or monster approaches he'd easily notice, seems outside the ramparts it's all cultivated land.

When I made sure the thief disappeared into the forest, I stopped tailing him.

Are the thieves on the town's outskirts?
It may be difficult to remain hidden in the Slums, which is home ground for the thieves that stayed in town.
I think that they are more likely to hide outside of town than in the slums.
Thieves who were driven out, are hiding outside the town. It is appropriate to think that that guy returned there.

I return through the east gate, after emptying my bladder, I go out of town through the south side.
I pay attention to the surroundings, advancing while using [Appraise].

Other people would find the appearance of me looking around restlessly suspicious.
Well, it can't be helped.

There are few people who walk around inside the forest.
If the thief had found me previously, even if he knew me or not, he would nevertheless stay vigilant.
I can't disregard the possibility of aiming for a surprise attack on the enemy.

If discovered by the previous thief, opportunity would become a pinch in an instant.
No matter what, I must not be discovered first.

I was walking slowly without making any noise.
After the rain it is hard to walk in the mud.

In addition, the south side of town is too large.
I was looking until evening, but couldn't find it.

When day becomes dark, I use [Warp] to return to the Adventurer's Guild.
After having dinner, I warp outside town to observe for a while.

Tomorrow I will continue searching the south side forest.
However, even searching the whole day I could not find it.

After dinner, I go outside of town again.

Tomorrow is the date agreed upon with the slave trader.
There is no more time.

Should I aim for the thieves remaining in town?
However, even if it's the Slums, it would be hard attacking the thieves hideout in the city.
Irrelevant to me, those thieves are unlikely to attack me if left alone and I'm not inclined to make a move on them.

I should aim to target the driven out of town thieves.
In that case it'd practically be legitimate self-defense.
It might not hold; however, the difference between legitimate self-defense in response after one is attacked and doing a preventive attack when one is threatened is always ambiguous in reality.

When debating, I noticed a light glimmer in the corner of my view.

I found him.
Same as yesterday, Lv 18 [Thief].

The source of light is moving slowly.
Is he about to leave or is he about to return to his hideout?

The sun has already set.
The area is pitch black, each step is uncertain.
Thanks to the darkness I won't stand out, but it would be a serious matter if I got caught in some tree roots.
If I fall down and make a loud noise, then everything would be ruined.

I assess the movement of the light and warp behind the thief.
When I come out of the dark wall, the lantern light reveals a man.
The thief with the hanging lantern illuminating his steps, walked slowly in the middle of the forest.

The lantern light faintly shines on the surroundings.
I just barely knew where I was placing each step.
Because I was following right behind the man carrying the light, I'm certain where I'm going.

Approaching the thief at this distance, there is no danger of losing sight of him.
I walk slowly. Matching the thief with short steps not to fall down, while being careful not to make a sound.

Before long, the man arrives at the hillside of a small cliff.
In the cliff there is a cave.
A door was put on the entrance of the cave and was shut firmly.

The man knocks on the door.
After a little while the door opens and someone shows their face.

31 year old, man, [Thief] Lv24.

Is that the hideout?

Lv24 thief says something and the door opens widely, he shows the Lv18 thief inside.
Lv18 thief enters the cave.
The Lv24 thief after letting in the man, carefully examined the surroundings looking left and right.
From that carefulness I can judge that this cave is certainly the thieves' hideout.

At last, I found it.
The driven out of town thieves are hiding there.
Attacking that cave is bound to be a big catch.

When the Lv24 thief closes the door, the surroundings become pitch black.
I briefly check the surroundings.

There are no signs of lights. Nothing showed up when using [Appraisal].
There is nobody.

I cast [Warp] and return to Vale pavilion's outer wall.

In reality, I wanted to check inside for the number of people, thieves' levels, and their daily routine for a number of days, but I don't have such time.
Sink or swim, I have to strike tonight.

It is hard to think what the thieves' movements at the base will be this midnight.
Or course, because they're being chased, I wouldn't know unless one is captured.
There were no signs of anything around the cavern.
I don't think anyone has found this place other than me.

Once I break in, they'll already be awake and dangerous.
A human's weakness is sleeping when its night time.
If I could half sleep like the Innkeeper, then I could sense danger.

I don't know what the daytime actions of the thieves are.
But are they asleep at dawn?
Assuming they're taking turns for night watch, that's more than half.

Attacking at an even later time might be better than attacking now.
Even if there is a possibility they will escape in the meantime.

Can't keep watching because I am only one person.
It's necessary to sleep well to be in shape.
I go back to my room and lay on the bed.

From the excitement of finding the thieves, I am wide awake.
When I think that I will commit murder soon, I think about various things.
And yet, before I knew it, I fall asleep.

I woke up early.
I understand the feeling. Perhaps I can't sleep soundly for a long time.
I might have braced myself to not oversleep.

I take out Durandal and put it on my waist, put on a cloak and carry the rucksack on the back.
Because level up is not necessary, Durandal must be used to fight.

Copper sword and scimitar are stored in the item box.
A second sword may be needed for something, but hanging on the waist, it might get in the way.
Need to calculate the advantages and disadvantages of both possibilities, it is better not to carry a hindrance.
If I am in a situation where a second sword is needed, it means I became unable to use Durandal and I fear at that point in time I've already lost.
I could take it out of the item box if I had some margin of time to do it.

It is the first time I leave the Inn with Durandal equipped, because the cloak is put on it can't be seen from outside.

Kaga Michio, male, 17 years old
[Explorer] Lv26, [Hero] Lv23, [Wizard] Lv25, [Warrior] Lv16
Equipment: Durandal, Leather Armour, Sandal Boots

I take off the leather mittens. [TL Note: type of gloves]
When fighting with swords it is better to have them on, but I never know when I may need to use my fingers freely.
To catch something, climb, hold something, use something.
Human hands are a convenient thing.

It might be a good thing to add more jobs, but I am not sure.
Or it may not be the case.
I don't know if there's any meaning to adding low level jobs I rarely use.
There is a possibility that the average level of jobs influence the stats.

At present condition I can use magic and if push comes to shove there is [Rush] and [Overwhelming], these four skills should be plenty.
When I fought the thieves attacking the village I managed to battle in a state where I had nothing but Durandal. I should be able to fight as is.

Once the preparations are done, I leave the Inn.
Was the conversation with the Innkeeper as usual?
There is a possibility that I am unnaturally tensed in some way.

Perhaps I'm not going to commit a crime according to this world's rules, so there is no need to worry.
I go outside the Inn and take a deep breath.

When I think about killing people it feels hazy, I suppress the feeling.
I have already killed twenty thieves in first village.
Certainly now, it can be summed up like that.

I take off the cloak, turn it inside out and put it back on.
The coat is the countermeasure against blood spurts.
I put on the hood firmly.

I pull out Durandal, face the outer wall of the Inn and cast [Warp].
I recall the area where the cavern is in the forest.

The place where I come out is pitch black.
There are no fires, nor can I detect anyone with [Appraisal].

I confirm there is no one nearby, this time I warp inside the cave.
When the thief entered through the door I incidentally saw the interior.
Because I saw, I can warp to any place I have seen.

The place I exit from [Warp] is pitch black again.
There are no lights or sound. Because there are no stars it's darker.

No. When listening calmly, I can hear the quiet breathing of people sleeping.
There is someone.

I use [Appraisal] on the surroundings.
[Appraisal] is convenient.
I can use it without light.

Inside the cave there are four thieves.
Lv18、Lv24、Lv29、Lv35.

It is perfect.
There is no-one of extremely high level.
Around these levels I can fight sufficiently and expect a bounty reward.
The underlings, have they already been done in or did they run away?

They seem to sleep deeply without putting up a night watch.
Do they have no awareness of danger?
Are there more people in other rooms?
In that case, it's better to finish things beforehand.

I know the location of four people in the pitch black cave.
I don't know the layout of the cave.
In the interior two people, Lv35 and Lv29. One person on this side, Lv24.
One person near the entrance.

I come out of warp near the middle of where the Lv18 and Lv24 are.
It is better to gather enemies on one side, so in the beginning I go to where the Lv18 is.

Because I don't know where I'll stepping on, I move by slowly shifting my feet.
The Lv18 thief seems to be sleeping directly on the ground.
In order to not wake him up I lightly poked with my foot to confirm his location.

This is the lower part of the body.
I moved to the location of the head.
Crouch to check where the neck is and place Durandal on the nape of the neck.
Before the final move, I gather my resolve.

The Lv18 thief doesn't make a sound.
I must have severed some of the arteries on his neck.

I think it went well, next I move by slowly shifting my feet to the location of the Lv24.
Half way there I turn my head to confirm, but [Appraisal] did not show any results for Lv18 thief.

The Lv24 thief seems to be lying down on a bed crudely made of boards or something.
At my feet there's a 5 to 10 centimeter difference in level on the floor.
Probably there's a hole there.

After confirming the same location on the neck of the Lv18 Thief, I pressed down Durandal on the lv 24's neck.

To test I cast [Firestorm].
Magic did not activate.
As expected, [Firestorm] only seems to work on monsters.

Because the difference in levels, this time I cut by fiercely pulling Durandal from below at an angle.
“Gu … …”

The Lv24 man groans.
It’s scary when Durandal’s blade comes towards me, after I pull it until I don’t feel any resistance from his neck. There is no such concern when chopping downwards.
Hence, I put too much strength and it seems I overdid it.

With this the Lv24 is finished but there are still two people to go.
Maybe they woke up from the voice.

I turn in a hurry and cast [Fireball] at the Lv35 thief.
The ball of fire appears overhead.
Surroundings become bright.
Because I am not blinded I can cope.

Inside the cave there were plain earth floor and walls.
There are no such things as furniture.
The thief’s makeshift bed was crudely made by piling up a bunch of boards and wooden boxes.

“Uwaa”

[Fireball] hits the Lv35 thief and the thief releases a loud voice.
While hearing the voice, I run up with Durandal and prepare to face the Lv29 thief.

The Lv29 thief suddenly raised his head and shouted.
With Durandal I cut his neck and his head flew off.
The thief’s head rolled off to the other side of the bed.

When I gaze at the Lv35 thief, he is rolling around on the ground in agony.
Did you naturally roll out of bed? To put out the fire on purpose?

Because of the excessive and vigorous rolling about, I do not approach carelessly.

The fire goes out and its pitch black again.
It is pitch black but with [Appraisal] I know his location.
Man equips his copper sword. It was hidden under the bed.

I think it's good that he's confused, not understanding what happened. In that condition he won't move so well.
Did he assume the possibility of being attacked?

It is difficult to jump in only knowing the location because of appraisal's result.
I cast [Fire Wall], I remember the man was lying besides the bed.
A wall of fire appears.
I see from my position, the Lv35 thief is on the other side of the bed.

The surroundings suddenly light up, the thief turns around.
Anyone would do that if a light appeared behind them.
Because it is normally a sign that there is someone behind.
While in the dark he thought I moved there.

However, this time, that is not the case.
The thief turning around, created an opportunity against the thief.

I take a large step and swung Durandal from the left.
Dudrandal takes a chunk out of the man's waist.
While moving to the right and cutting, the thief collapses.

Chapter 28 – Acquisition

Four thieves were defeated.
Speaking of level, if you think about how they were the ones that survived after being hunted and driven out of town, it's to be expected, that they'd have a pretty high bounty.

Because I don't want to stay in this place too long, I only perform the necessary work.
First I tore off the thieves' clothes and made them into cloth wrappers.
I cut off and gather the four left wrists.

The [Firewall] I cast when defeating the thief has by chance spread to the bed boards.
The flames have lit up the cave.

When the [Fireball] was released, the thief released a loud voice but no one entered the cave.
There doesn't seem to be any companions nearby.
Even so, I wouldn't welcome someone looting the hard earned spoils and I refuse to stay here for 30 minutes until the intelligence cards pop out.
So I have no choice but to take the wrists.

I collect four copper swords.
There doesn't seem to be anything like leather armour or protectors which are valuable.
Do they have any or did they hide them somewhere?

There may be treasure storage somewhere, but I don't have time to search now.
It may have been a mistake to silence all four members.
Well it can't be helped, there didn't seem to be many options.
I didn't even know if the thieves could speak Brahim language.

Did they decide to keep their swords close to themselves? As expected of thieves in the middle of a dispute.
Even though it was useless this time.

I collect the necessary things and leave the cave.
First I warp near a river and wash the cloak. Blood comes out quickly.

I'm relying only on starlight and intuition, but I probably wasn't washing all the blood away.
I wash my hands and face, but I don't think there is blood on anything other than the cloak.

After putting the cloak to dry on a tree branch, I move to the Labyrinth to waste time.
Because I was feeling excited, I did not explore properly.

As expected, willingly killing someone had a bigger shock on me than I thought.
Even when starting to calm down, I could not composedly explore the Labyrinth.
When a monster appeared from far away, with my current state of mind, I could not fight very well.

I finish early.
When the time was right, I collected the intelligence cards and went to the forest to throw away the useless wrists.
Afterwards I take the cloak and return to the Inn.

I return to my room and wipe my body with lukewarm water.
I lie on the bed while holding the scimitar like a body pillow and close my eyes.
Though I was feeling excited, before long I fell asleep.

After the sun had completely risen, I woke up.
It seems that before going to the thieves hideout my sleeping time was short.
I think I slept well.
I was in high spirits after having exterminated the thieves, but I think my sense of relief was even bigger.

Eliminating the danger from revenge and the goal of getting Roxanne was within sight.
How much I'll receive from the bounty isn't set yet, but I have done more or less everything that can be done.
If the money is insufficient, then I can't do anything about it.

Where do I exchange the intelligence cards?
While thinking about it, I doze off on the bed.

Specifically, should I do it at Vale town's Knight's Order or should I take it to another town?
Because I exchanged in Vale town just 10 days ago, if I bring bounties consecutively there's a possibility someone would have an eye on me.

The Knight's Order seems to be linked with the thieves from the Slums.
And thieves would not welcome the appearance of a new bounty hunter.
Even if it is the extermination of thieves they themselves are hostile against.

Redeeming the bounty in another town reduces the possibility of being recognised.
However, I don't know if I will be able to properly claim the bounty this time.

I don't know what kind of system bounties use.
When thinking normally, aren't the people of this town and Knight's Order the ones who offer the bounties for this town's thieves in the first place?
In other towns there is a possibility that the bounty money is lower or I might not get paid at all.
There is a possibility the reward money does not go down on the same day you make an inquiry.
I'm worried because the promised deadline to obtain Roxanne is today.

Also, they may ask what the situation was like when I defeated the thieves.
Before, when I claimed the bounty, they didn't ask anything but the village merchant might have explained something.
It could be possible that the merchant that comes here frequently and Vale Town's Knights Order members were acquainted.
The Merchant had credibility and the possibility of the whole village lying is low. Since the thought of driven out of town thieves attacking nearby villages was high, would a brief description have been accepted?

Or the Knights Order warning the village beforehand, is also not unthinkable.
There's also the likelihood that someone ran from the village to report the attack to the Knight's Order.

This time to what degree will they ask about the circumstances?
If I take the intelligence cards to another town and they start asking questions it will be troublesome.
If they end up asking me to show them where I defeated the thieves,

wouldn't they'd get suspicious that it's in the outskirts of Vale Town?
Why not bring it to the town of Vale Knight's Order.

When such a possibility is considered, it is appropriate to take the bounty to the Knight's Order in Vale town.
It is possible to explain that the associates of the thieves who attacked the village, held a grudge and that I turned the tables on them when they tried to avenge them.
There is possibility that this would be looked down on, but on this occasion nothing can be done.

After having breakfast, I leave the Inn and go to the opposite building.
I peek inside but I don't see the acquainted knight or beautiful female knight.

Well, what should I do?
It'd be preferable if no one I'm acquainted with, who would recognize me were present.
However, talking with a person who knows the circumstances may be easier.
If for example the Knight's Order and thieves from the Slums are connected and potentially spread the information that I am a thief hunter, it would be better if fewer people knew my face.

Finally the sun rose above the city.
I stroll around the city to kill some time.
I sold the 4 copper swords.
Once Roxanne is with me she might need them, but I will think about it when the time comes.
It seems it's time for Knight's Order's office personnel shift change.
I go when the sun is high, I find the Apprentice Knight near the entrance to the office.

"Ey. Working hard, aren't you?"
"Yes, thank you."

I call out the Apprentice Knight.
Calling him apprentice is my own assumption.
Knight Lv5. He was Lv4 the other day, his level has increased.

“Is it a good time to talk?”
“Yes”
“Actually last night, some odd guys picked a quarrel with me. They seemed to be thieves.”

I take out the thieves’ intelligence cards and give them to the Apprentice Knight.

“Thieves?”
“Well, certainly they came for revenge and I turned the tables on them”

I puff out my chest.
My plan to look like a big-shot.
In other words, the “It was just a coincidence, a coincidence. It’s not like I purposely picked a fight” kind of plan.

Because the Apprentice Knight returned a courtesy smile, it’s a success.
Well, I want to assume it was a success.
I say it was a success.
Perhaps he was just amazed.

“Just in case can you show me your intelligence card?”
“Yea”

I present my left arm in front of the Apprentice Knight.
After the knight confirms my intelligence card, he says he’ll look them up and goes into the office.

Because I was not questioned, the strategy was a success.
Even if it’s to avoid suspicious people, I don’t think this plan’s chance of success would have changed.

Before long, the Apprentice Knight returns with a small bag.
Seems, this time the beautiful female knight wasn’t bothered to come out.

“I was able to confirm it. The four thieves were comrades of the ones who attacked the Somara Village. For that reason they might have been aiming for you.”
“That’s dangerous.”

I am thankful that the explanation came from the other party.

*"There are no more members of the group. I don't think there is much danger anymore."

I receive the small award bag and quickly depart.
A detailed questioning about the thieves' corpses is not needed.
Last time it was the same too, it was the same treatment about the thieves I killed at the village.
The thieves of this world may be treated like that.

It is easier to doing something than worrying about it.
It went better than I thought.

I quickly move into cover and take a peek inside the small bag.
Lots of silver coins and how many gold coins?
After confirming there are 5 or more gold coins I was relieved.

I already have 33 gold coins and more than 400 silver coins.
I have the funds to obtain Roxanne.

I return to the road and go towards the Slave Dealer's house.
Those 10 days were long.
Just one more step to the finish.

I unintentionally make a grin on my face.
Only one last thing remains.
I can't be relieved until this is finished.
Can't cross out the possibility that the Slave Trader might try to swindle me.

"I'm Michio. I desire to be attended by Mr Allen."

I arrived at the Slave Trader's house and told the man who came out.
The man left and let me inside once he returned.

"Please wait here"

I was shown into a room next to the entrance.
In the waiting room where a carpet is spread, I take out Durandal.
A precaution just in case.

Because the Slave Trader knows I have 420,000 Nars, Durandal will not look unusual.
Instead, to indirectly hint at future profits for him, it would be meaningful to show off some luxurious equipment.
Though I don't know if Durandul looks luxurious.
From now on, if he thinks I am a good customer, he will not do strange things.
When I think about it, is leather armour too subtle?

"Michio-sama, sorry for keeping you waiting"
"Yea"

The Slave Trader turned up immediately.

"Are the preparations for the funds done?"
"Well, somehow."
"Then, please come to this room."
"Understood"

I was lead to a room I have been in twice before.

"It was just like what I was expecting."
"I wonder how"

Just like the Slave Dealer said, I was not able to earn it in the Labyrinth.
Rather, could the Slave Dealer's expectations have been slightly off?
I sit on the sofa, a servant who is not Roxanne comes to serve herbal tea.

"Please drink"

The Slave Trader offered when the servant left.
I place my cup near my mouth and pretend to drink.
If the slave merchant is scheming anything, it would be quick and easy to mix poison into the drink.
I don't need to drink.

I take out the small bag and verify the contents.
The reward is 100,000 and several thousand Nars? The previous time it was more.

I take out 10 pieces of gold from the small reward bag.
And take out the pouch from the rucksack.
There are 428 silver coins that were separated beforehand.

“My bad that there are a lot of silver coins.”
“Of course I don’t mind”

I turned to the side and chanted in whispers “Item Box Open”, I took out 28 gold coins from the item box.
This is 422,800 Nars.

“Please check it.”

It is difficult to count when there are 400 silver coins.
It’s almost like harassment.

“Thank you. I certainly received it. I will bring her soon, please wait a moment”

When the Slave Dealer was done confirming the number of coins, he put all of them on a plate and left.

He returned soon, while I am waiting without drinking the herbal tea.
Roxanne was the same as then.

She was standing behind the Slave Trader hiding.
She was wearing light green colour tunic and trousers.

The face of a beauty as expected.
I suspected that in the time I haven’t seen her my expectations of her beauty grew to unreasonable levels, but that is not the case.
Actually, compared to the one in my memories, the real thing is more beautiful.

“Thank you.”

Roxanne sees me and bows.
Dog ears swayed.
Those ears are adorable.

Well, it is questionable whether the bow was done to express gratitude or not.

“My best regards”
“Yes. My best regards too”
“Well then, to perform the contract let me take your intelligence card”

The Slave Trader steps into the room to inform.

“Yea”
“Yes”

I extended my left hand.
Roxanne also comes aside and puts out her arm.

When the Slave Trader recites an incantation, the intelligence cards comes out.
After that Slave Trader recites something mumbling.

“Now the contract is finished. Please check the intelligence cards.”

Kaga Michio, Male, 17 years old, Explorer, Freeman
Possesses Slave Roxanne

As suggested when I checked the intelligence card it had changed.
It means the Slave Trader may not have been a swindler after all.
Unless there is magic that can falsify the display that I don’t know of yet.

Job shows [Explorer] now.
It seems like the first job is displayed as expected.

“Errm, yes”

In front of me who is releasing a small breath of relief, Roxanne has stretched out her hand.

Roxanne, Female, 16 years old, Beast Soldier, Slave
Owner Kaga Michio

“Indeed. Certainly it seems that the contract has been completed”

Roxanne's intelligence card seems similar.
I put my arm in front of Roxanne to show her just in case.

"Errr … … is it alright?"

Roxanne's beautiful eyes take a peek in my direction.
Seems the intelligence card is not something you show to slaves.

"Well, I don't think there will be any problem if mine is seen."
"Yes"

Roxanne read my intelligence card.

"With this Micho-sama has become an owner. The owner has the obligation to provide the slave with residence, meals, and is obliged to pay taxes. When you abandon the obligations or treat the slave remarkably unfairly, the contract is annulled. Making changes to the will is a Slave Dealer's job. On that occasion please use this place"

While showing Roxanne the card, the Slave Dealer explains it plainly.
It gives the feeling of routine work.
Like some commonplace speech.
Has a feeling of Miranda Warnings from American detective dramas. Like that phrase "You have the right to remain silent."

I want to ask what is considered being treated remarkably unfair, but don't want to ask in front of Roxanne.
I want to challenge the limits or so, but it'd be a problem if I thought that way.

Perhaps it is decided in the will, as to what will happen to the slave when the owner dies.
The talk about taxes, I haven't heard about.

"Regarding taxes?"
"It is poll tax. The slave has no obligation to pay. The owner will pay the amount."

Well, naturally there will be taxes in this world.
Though I heard it for the first time.

“Do you know about the taxes?”
“Ye-yes. … … More or less”

If I ask Roxanne about it, she’ll answer what she knows.
If Roxanne knows it, I will hear about it afterwards.

“Understood”

I nodded to the Slave Trader.

Chapter 29 – Double

“Well then, I look forward to serving you next time.”

I was seen off by the slave trader and left the trade company with Roxanne.
Roxanne is holding a big case with both hands.
That looks like all her belongings.

I glance at Roxanne frequently.
I should be able to look at her more confidently, but I’m strangely embarrassed.
Roxanne looks even more beautiful when seen under the sunlight.
Her white skin seems to shine.

The tunic is pretty loose, but, as expected, her chest is huge.
That’s a considerable bulge.
Yes, I’m looking forward to it.
While thinking about it, can’t I look at them brazenly?

“Is that not heavy?”

I point at the case and ask.
It feels uncomfortable seeing a woman carry luggage.

“Y-yes. It is fine”
“Let me see it for a bit”
“Y-yes. Here you are”

I stretch out my right hand to take it.
While confirming its weight, there’s another thing I want to do.

I hold Durandal with my left hand and with my right hand I hold the case by the handle.
It was a good idea to take out Durandal, but I didn’t have the opportunity to erase it at the trading company.
While confirming the weight, Durandal is concealed by the case.
I cast [Character Reset] and Durandal is erased.

“Certainly, it is not heavy.”

I say while presenting the case to Roxanne.

At first I was going to carry the case, but then changed my mind.
On one hand as it should normally be a slave's work to carry the luggage, I would look strange doing so.
On the other, there's the sword.

Since I'm carrying the case, if a situation arises, it would be hard to deal with it.
As Roxanne does not have a sword, I would have to deal with it.

I think that's precisely where modern society has changed: from the notion of carrying a sword in downtown to that of a man carrying things like luggage.
Perhaps, violence in downtown in this world is considered possible.
By carrying Roxanne's luggage, it may be seen as me valuing her. However in reality, it will put Roxanne in danger.
I should be able to pull out the sword anytime.

The attendant has the luggage and the master has a sword.
It may be common sense in this world.

I return the case to Roxanne, open the [Item Box] and take out the scimitar.
When I was giving the handle, our fingers touch and my heart throbs.
They were white, slender and soft. They were a woman's fingers.
Even if I say so, I don't know what I'm feeling. I wonder what it is.
Are such things fine?

"F-for now let's get lodging at Vale pavilion. Exit on the next street and straight to the roundabout. Follow me."
"Y-yes. Certainly."

I put the scimitar on my waist and start walking.
Roxanne follows me.

I am being accompanied behind me by a woman with luggage.
It is slightly uncomfortable.
From a little while ago, Roxanne also seemed to start being tense.
"By the way, can you read Kanji?"
"Kanji is?"

When I ask, I look back. Roxanne tilts her head out of curiosity.
Her face is beautiful.
No, that's not it.
Yes. I found out immediately that kanji can't be read.
It is because the word kanji was not converted to Brahim language.
Because there is no concept of kanji, kanji was not changed from a foreign language.

"Well….could you read the intelligence card?"
"Ye-yes"
"In what language is the intelligence card?"
"It is the Brahim language…….oh. Well… Intelligence cards work directly on the consciousness of the person who is reading. That person will see characters they can read."

I see. I get it.
It's not written in kanji, I just see characters that I can understand.
What does a person who can't read see?

"I see. Can Roxanne read Brahim words?"
"Ye-yes. To a small degree"

I incidentally got a person capable of reading the Brahim language.

"Because I am hopeless at reading and writing Brahim language, I want you to teach me"
"Ye-yes. I will within my range of understanding"
"Thank you. Please take care of me."

I go past the explorer guild.
Next time I will not need a reading proxy.

"Because you came in 10 days like promised, I have not learned much yet"
"Hmm? You studied at the trading company?"
"Yes. Being able to speak it is definitely an advantage, so I learned the Brahim language."

So the slave dealer had such a service.
No, is it because being able to speak the Brahim language had a higher value?
I wouldn't say it is an arbitrary service.

“That is the Vale pavilion”
“Yes”

Because we have luggage, we pass through the city without stopping and head directly for the Inn.
Some men passing by are staring at Roxanne.
I feel a bit superior.

However, I wanted to tell them “Don’t look at my Roxanne.”
Even I have not looked at her directly yet.

We enter Vale pavilion.

“Is it ok to transfer to a double room?”

I ask the innkeeper who was trying to prepare the key.

“Certainly…….double is good?”
“Yes. And add dinner for two”
“A double room is 380 Nars. With dinner, ermm… since you’ve stayed long term, with special service it is 350 Nars.”

Mysteriously the [30% Discount] works when a meal is attached and it becomes cheaper.
Won’t he have any questions?
However because he said service, there seems to be some awareness of the discount.

“Understood. That is 350.”

Anyway, he sounded grateful, so I had to accept it.
From the pouch inside the rucksack, I pull out 3 silver coins and 50 copper coins and place them on the counter.

“Then both of you take out your arms.”

Come to think of it, is this an intelligence card check?
He will know Roxanne is a slave.
As it can’t be helped, I extend my left hand.

“Roxanne, you too.”
“Ye-yes”

For some reason Roxanne took out her hand while looking befuddled.

“The double is on the 5th floor. I will guide you to take your luggage from the previous room and then to the new room.”

The Innkeeper didn’t say anything in particular after seeing the intelligence card.
Does he not meddle in customer privacy?
He takes 2 keys and quickly climbs the stairs.

“Lend me your luggage”

I receive the case from Roxanne and follow after.
Inside the Inn, I don’t need to give preference to the sword.

“Th-thank you”

Roxanne also follows.
We climb the stairs.

“First, please take all your belongings from the room”

Innkeeper unlocks room 311.
I pass the case to Roxanne and enter the room.

I carry the cloak in my left arm. Then I jam the rope, laundry and the remaining luggage into the wooden bucket. I take the jersey from the closet. I also take out the leather shoes from the bottom closet shelf.

“That is all.”
“Then, let’s go to 5th floor.”

The innkeeper locks 311 and leads the way.

“Errm, I can carry it for you.”
“No, it’s all right.”

I stop Roxanne who wanted to carry my luggage even though she's already carrying her case.
We climb the stairs.
3rd floor is no problem. However for the 5th floor, I want an elevator, but there is no such thing.
"Double rooms are only on the 5th floor, and you are the only double room customer."

The innkeeper seems to have read my dissatisfaction and explains.
He doesn't know the reason.

"Hmm."
"This is the room."

The man unlocks the room.

"I see."

I enter it.
There was one big bed and on the inner side, a desk. Ware there 2 chairs because it's a double room?

I put the luggage on the desk.

The size of the room compared to room 311 has not changed much.
It was bigger by a slight extent. Perhaps this was a large room?
Did it feel more spacious because there is no closet?

"There is a closet on the right. The bottom shelf here is self-locking, so please don't leave valuables outside"

Said the innkeeper and opens the sliding door wall to reveal an equipment closet.
The closet was larger than the one in 311.

Afterwards he repeats the same thing as when I first entered room 311, then hands me the key and leaves.

I sit on the only bed.
The softness is about the same as in the 3rd floor room.

I look around while Roxanne is standing near the entrance with nothing to do.

“Come in and sit on the chair”
“Ye-yes……”

Roxanne goes past nervously.
More than being nervous, I’ve the impression that she’s a bit frightened.

“Well. Is this number 5?”

I show the key to Roxanne.
This room number is 517. Because I know 1, the number on the left side should be 5.

“Ye-yes, that is so.”
“And, this is 7?”
“Ye-yes……”

Umm. The conversation does not continue.
Roxanne’s fright is visible.
Along the way I feel like we were able to have a little more conversation, but once we returned to the hotel, it finished.
Even if I plan to, I would not suddenly push her down in the daytime.

Well when there are only 2 people in a hotel room, it can’t be helped.
Additionally there is only one bed.

“Errr … …. Can I touch your ears?”

Anyhow, I try to ask that request.
If she’s gonna be frightened after all, I feel like I could behave more wildly.
Perhaps. Probably. Maybe.

“Ah……ye-yes.”
“Then, come here.”

Roxanne is summoned.
Reluctantly. It is just skinship, skinship.
Skinship is important.

If she's frightened of being assaulted, I should convince her I'm not scary before I end up impatiently putting my hands on her.
Surely. Probably. Certainly.

I want to jump at the beauty in front of my eyes, but I endure it.
I am a rational person.
A person of reason is a saying in English, but I don't know.
Worldly desires disappearing. Break down delusions.

"……Yes."
"Here."

Roxanne who tried to sit on the floor is invited to sit beside me on bed.
I would not sit on the floor.

Because she was next to me, I wanted to embrace her spontaneously, but I endure.
Would that be why she did not come beside me?
Dispersing worldly desires. Extinguish passion.

I place my hand on Roxanne's head.
From her side, Roxanne is also beautiful.
Her hair smoothly glides through my hand.
It's soft and luxurious.
Indeed, it looked nice and similarly felt nice.

Do-don't, don't. I just want to push her down.
Of course, patience is the only way to endure it.
Worldly desires disappearing. Evil thoughts removed.

After enjoying touching her hair to satisfaction, I touch her dog ears.
The ears are large and soft while dangling powerlessly.
The thickness is 1 or 2 centimeters.

Because they're lop ears, they don't have hard parts? Somehow they feel puffed up.
Fluffy and soft.
Not good. It's becoming a habit.
Yes. Why do I need to hold back? I touch them with both hands.

“Although Roxanne is a beauty, your ears are cute.”

Roxanne is a beauty yet does not give a cold impression. I think her lop ears are having a big effect.
Her big ears bring out a friendly feeling.

“Eh…….Th-thank you very much.”

I meet Roxanne’s eyes.
Roxanne looks down embarrassed.

I have no choice but to do it soon.
I suppress such impolite thoughts.
Evil desires dispersing. Brutal heart, calm down.

I stroke her ear.
I innocently stroke her ear.
Worldly desires dispersing. Obsession crushed.

I pat her ears and Roxanne calms down a little.
But my worldly desires do not calm down.

I watch Roxanne’s appearance from the side.
There is nothing to dislike.
Even if I don’t like something, I want to put up with it.
Skinship is important.

After all, looking from the side, Roxanne’s chest is big.
No, not that. Don’t think about that.
I want to check, but endure it.
Worldly desires dispersing. Lust smashed.

“Well, once again, please take care of me.”
“Yes, please take care of me too.”

Roxanne lowers her head without minding me touching her ears.
I catch the back of the head that came up.

“These ears are pleasant.”
“That …”

“What?”
“May I call you master?”

Yes.
I want someone to praise me for not throwing myself on Roxanne.
Worldly desires dispersing. Suppressing animal nature.

Is this the result of skinship? Our conversation had continued a little.
If I throw myself at her, we will be back to the beginning of her being frightened.

“That’s right. You can call me so.”
“Yes. Master.”

Woops.
That was dangerous now.
I almost embraced her unconsciously.
Proper mind. Proper mind.
Worldly desires disappearing, sexual desires suppressed.

“Which reminds me, there is only one bed”

I spoke while touching her ears.
No, wait.
Is such a topic all right?

“Eh?”
“What?”

Just as expected, Roxanne asks again.
That seemed a little different? I wonder what?

“Well. It is master’s order.”
“Eh? Is that so?”
“Yes. You asked for a double room”
“Ah”

Indeed.
Double is one bed, so 2 beds is a Twin?

Certainly when he asked if a double was OK, I nodded.
That innkeeper, he did it on purpose.
Good job.

“You did not know?”

Is this why Roxanne was frightened once we come to the inn?
Well, even if I realized it now, we still have one bed.

“First, there is something I want to say.”
“Yes.”
“Roxanne, listen. I have come from an unbelievably far-away place.”

I straighten my back and tell Roxanne while touching her ears. Skinship is important.
I didn’t tell the truth, but if a lie is found out later it will be troublesome.
Therefore I only told a half-truth.
“When you say it is a far-away place, is it further than Kasshim?”
“I don’t know where Kasshim is, but probably. Roxanne can think of it as further away.”
“Is that so.”

Roxanne ponders on something.
It is further than the place Roxanne thought of.
That is a good expression.
“I was also in the countryside. Since I don’t understand common sense of this place, Roxanne will have to teach me various things like common sense”
“Yes.”
“Even if I may know something like this or that, I’ll be glad if you explain absolutely everything to me.”

Maybe double room and twin room was also common sense on earth.
Maybe I was deceived somehow.

“Later, as you may have heard, Roxanne will enter the Labyrinth with me. That is my intention.”
“Yes. I think I can be useful in battle. Please leave it to me”

When speaking about the Labyrinth, Roxanne looks honest to me.
Those eyes shine mysteriously.

Chapter 30 – Reaction

When I talked about entering the labyrinth, Roxanne's atmosphere changed.
It seems it was due to self-confidence.

It's somehow scary.
As a result of being stared at directly, I stop touching her ears.
Because we are going as a party, I'm grateful that she is confident in combat.

"May I put the clothes in the closet? They may crease."

Because her ears were let go, Roxanne stands up.
Hmmm. Oops, she escaped.

"Yes. Do so."
"Thank you."

Roxanne opens the case she brought from the trading company.
It contains the maid clothes.
Did she bring that?

The maid clothes were bought along with Roxanne.
Because I paid 2800 Nars which was just a fraction, the regular price should be 4000 Nars.
That by itself is a great price.
It was a good purchase.

If I had bought Roxanne independently, the [30% Discount] would not have worked.
I don't know whether the slave trader has [Calc] skill or not. Anyways when buying individual items by itself, the [30% Discount] probably does not work.
Did the sale price turn into 422,000 because the slave trader was selling Roxanne alone for 600,000 Nars and had added 4,000 Nars for the clothes?
The moral of the story is that one shouldn't be too greedy.
Roxanne straightens out the creases and puts the maid clothes in the closet.
Her appearance from behind is also charming.
From behind, it looks like her trembling has stopped.
Yes. She was a good purchase.

In proportion to her chest, Roxanne has a slim figure.
Our height is about the same, but she's a size slimmer.
She really gives the impression of a woman.

"Eh? You were barefooted?"

While undressing Roxanne with my eyes once again, I realize that she was barefoot.
"Yes, I am."

Roxanne replies as if it was a matter of fact.
Did she come barefoot from the trading company?
Maybe being barefoot is not particularly uncommon.

"Can I ask for your cloak?"
"Yes, certainly."

I stand up and give Roxanne my cloak from the table.
While she is putting the cloak in the closet, I pet her head.

It's not necessarily because her trembling has stopped.
It is to confirm.
I just want to confirm how much she feels like letting me do.
I feel like she could have already easily escaped.
My suspicions that getting a slave as beautiful as Roxanne could be a swindle haven't completely been wiped out.

Roxanne obediently lets me stroke her head.
Looking at this behavior, should I conclude that she was already prepared to be sold as a slave?
I don't understand her mind. Even if she doesn't like it, it is not revealed on her face.

I unintentionally embrace her.
No, that's not it. It's a misunderstanding.
It's not like my capacity to endure was only this much.
There is no intention to suddenly push her down.

"Regrettably however, I don't plan to let you get away."
"Aa, Yes ……"

Roxanne gives a quiet answer and relaxes her body.
There is no more concern for fraud.
Perhaps, even if I push her down at this moment, she would be ok with it.

Because I embrace her from the back, my arms are on her chest.
They……are bigger than I thought.
But at the moment, I must endure it. Besides, there are other things that we have to do first.
I almost didn't feel any guilt from buying a slave.
I don't understand. I might have felt something when buying a slave.
Well, there's no need to push myself to feel guilty.

"These leather shoes, ah, not that. These sandals, you can have."

I stretch out my arms and release Roxanne.
My endurance won't last any longer.

"Is that all right?"
"Because we are entering the labyrinth, take the equipment item."

Roxanne doesn't particularly dislike it as I crouch down and touch her foot.
Roxanne's feet are not much different from a human's.
They are not hairy even though she is from the Wolf Beast tribe.

However it is slightly small.
The length from her heel to toes was 2 or 3 sizes shorter.

"Thank you."
"Only if they could be put on properly, but…"
"Yes. Ah, well. They are something like a magic accessory. They stretch and contract to fit the person who equips them. Therefore, it's alright"

Roxanne explains from over my head.
I don't know what she thought about me touching her body, but she didn't show a behavior like that of dislike or of wanting to run away.

It's a good feeling of touching her all over.
Her feet are small and lovely.
The top of her feet was silky smooth.

“I see.”
“This is the difference between normal clothes and equipment.”

Equipment seems like something very convenient.
If isn’t, then everything would need to be custom-made instead of one size fits all.

“Isn’t that common sense?”
“Yes. I think most people know it.”
“……Errr. Because I lack common sense, please take care of me in the future.”
“Yes.”

That seems to be common sense in this world.
Well, it seems that way. After all, there are normal villagers wearing equipment.
The explanation is immediately useful.
And, I am thankful to Roxanne for giving me support when needed.

“There are one-handed swords and 2-handed swords. Which do you prefer?”

I stand up and ask Roxanne.

“A one-handed sword please.”
“Sure.”

I hand over a scimitar to Roxanne from the desk.

Giving her the sword might not be a good idea or maybe that might not be the case.
From the attitude I’ve seen till now, I judge that it’ll be fine to give it.

In a situation where Roxanne is a slave in appearance only and the slave trader had ulterior motives, I’d be giving weapons to an enemy.
For example, having the freedom to kill me.

I should think carefully about whether or not to.
If I think about it even if Roxanne does not have a sword to use, it would be

hard for me to defend myself.
Because we will sleep in the same bed.

Because we are going to the labyrinth, I will have to give her the sword eventually.
Now is the best timing to give her the sword.
Giving it early is a sign to show that I trust Roxanne that much.

If I'm going to be killed, it'll be after losing my virginity. I think I should at least wait till tomorrow to give her the sword, or that's what I feel like doing.
As a person.

"I haven't maintained it, but its condition does not seem to have worsened"

Roxanne is wholeheartedly checking the scimitar despite whether or not knowing my intentions.
She has a serious face.

"Err? Does it need maintenance?"
"Yes"

Um, well that's the case if she says so.

"Other equipments too?"
"Of course."
"Is that so?"

When I think about it, it is so.
I haven't done anything like maintenance.

"Master, from now on I will do the maintenance because one's life depends on the equipment. Please value them more.
"…O-Of course"

Roxanne leans forward and lectures me.
I move back by reflex.

"I will leave it to you."

Roxanne finishes putting the rest of the luggage that was left on the desk into the closet.

“Well, then come here, try putting on the sandals.”

Having the leather boots in hand, I tell Roxanne to sit on the bed.
I untie the string and remove the sandals to put on the leather boots.

It feels just like it looks. The leather boots is an equipment that is a rank higher than sandals.
Sandals leave a foot half bare so boots should have much greater defense power.
There were no monsters that aimed for the feet and I didn’t want to feel stuffy while I wore the sandals, but it’s safer if Roxanne doesn’t have any better equipment than her master.

“Yes.”
“Err. Here.”

I invite Roxanne who tries to sit on the floor again to sit on bed next to me and give her the sandals.

Roxanne sits next to me and puts on the sandals.
Sandals that should fit my feet somehow fit Roxanne’s small feet exactly.
Magic is amazing.

“Today in the city, while the sun is still up, I want to buy any necessary things. Is there any other equipment that you need?”
“If possible, a wooden shield please.”
“Wooden shield. Anything else?”
“In regards to protection, give me the remains from master’s basic equipment upgrades. For me, handed down things are sufficient.”

We talk while I am touching Roxanne’s ears next to me.
There is no more fear or tension from her like when we entered the room.
The results of skinship.
Skinship is great.

“Understood. What about necessary things other than equipment?”
“Oil for maintenance is needed. Do you have any oil?”

“No, I don’t.”
“Then I would like a small olive oil bottle”

Olive oil?

“Understood.”
“Later I’ll use a rag cloth. Is there any worn out underwear?”
“There isn’t. Just that.”
“It is still new.”

Roxanne put away the laundry. Oops, my pumpkin pants that I bought 5 days ago have been seen.
Son-in-law can’t hold on any longer.
Incidentally, I am wearing trunks at the moment.

“I don’t mind using a towel. Any other necessary things besides that?”
“I would like a water canteen.”
“Water canteen? One moment.”

From the rucksack, I take out a small wooden bucket substituting for a cup.
I take out the medium sized wooden bucket that Roxanne put in the closet.
I take both and run to the toilet.

I return to the room with the small wooden bucket filled with water and give it to Roxanne.

“Thank you.”
“Drink it.”
“Yes, I will.”

Roxanne tastes it.
The water was made with [Water Wall].

It does not have a smell and it tastes like normal water.
There might be something wrong with it, but there shouldn’t be anything dangerous compared to the water from a river or well water.
I’ve been drinking for several days and my stomach has not had any problems.

By the way, [Water Ball] had too much force for the bucket to receive.

“Is the water fine?”
“Well, sorry. I did not want water. I wanted a canteen to use in the labyrinth”
“Yeah, I understand. It’s ok. You will understand sooner or later.”
“Is that so?”

Roxanne who does not know about my magic is persuaded.
Of course, we should have a flask rather than not have one.
However water is rather heavy. When you think about that cost, the convenience of water canteen is rather small.

I sit down on the bed.
For some reason while I was not here, Roxanne had moved down to the floor.
No wonder.
She is being cautious of me pushing her down when sitting on the bed.

“Over here.”
“Yes.”

I beckon her to my side.

“It’s ok. It’s not like we’ll do something lewd.”
“W-Well, but it is master’s bed.”
“Roxanne will also sleep here.”

I embrace her and whisper in a low voice.
Like a terrible evil magistrate.

“……Well, if it’s me receiving pity, I’ll get in the bed, but I don’t mind sleeping on the floor.”

Roxanne looks down and mutters such a compromise.
There’s no way I’d think of putting her to sleep on the floor.
What kind of evil magistrate am I?

“Do it right now!” said something screaming inside of me, but I restrain it.
Particularly, now there is no need. It should be fine to enjoy later slowly.

“That is common sense?”
“In the trading company, I heard there were masters like that too.”
“I’m fine with it. It’s cold and troublesome, so we’ll sleep together in the bed.”
“Ye-Yes. Thank you very much.”

While embracing her, I stroke her hair.
She did not avoid or dislike it.
Because she accepted up to this point, now I really think it’s a good thing she is mine.

“After buying another water bucket, is there anything else?”
“I have to hold luggage. That rucksack or something like that.”
“Rucksack? Got it.”
“That’s all for me.”

I am touching her hair while talking.
I touch her ears.
These lop ears are becoming a habit.

“In this city, you can only buy once every 5 days. So it’s possible that we will not be able to buy anything at worst for 5 days. So think about it properly.”
“Yes, it is fine.”
“Shield, olive oil, towel, bucket, rucksack, armor, socks. What else to buy such as these things?”

I am counting while confirming. 7 items.

“Yes.”
“For me, is there soap around here?”

It’s fine. Soap translates fine into the Brahim language.

“Soap? Because soap is very expensive, things like the Koichi fruit bran are normally used, I think.”
“Too expensive? Shampoo … … no, it’s nothing. Koichi fruit it is.”
“Yes.”

Shampoo is not translated.
Well in a world where soap is said to be expensive, there wouldn't be things like shampoo, rinse, hair treatment or a conditioner.

"Is there something like a tooth brush?"
"Tufted toothpick right. I think a Shukure branch is sold somewhere in the city."

Tufted toothpick?

"Shield, Olive oil, towel, bucket, rucksack, armor, socks, Koichi fruit, Shukure branch, so 9 items? Need to memorize, so I don't forget"
"Yes."
"Then, let's go shopping."

I stand up with the rucksack.
I want to keep touching Roxanne forever, but I shouldn't.
Or rather, I should finish the errands quickly.

I take out the copper sword from item box and carry the rucksack on my back.
There is money in the rucksack.

"Certainly."

Roxanne stands up at once.

I entrust the key and leave the Inn.
First at the place like a general store I purchase a small wooden bucket, rucksack, small bottle of olive oil, Koichi fruit bran and Shukure branch.
Total sum of 103 Nars.
The Koichi fruit bran is inside something like a scent bag, probably to use it as it is.

2 Shukure branches are 1 Nar. So cheap.
I mean, really, it was just a cut branch of something.
It costs nothing.

I pack the stuff I bought in the rucksack and let Roxanne carry it.

At the next place resembling a cloths shop , I picked up 2 towels.
Roxanne already has hers to use, but purchasing extras are not a problem, right?

“There are at least two pairs of socks. Pick the ones you like.”
“Is it ok for me to choose?”
“Go ahead.”
“But I don’t know your size.”

She didn’t understand.

“No. Roxanne, these socks are for you.”
“For me? Is that ok?”
“It’s fine.”

I nod. Roxanne with an earnest face starts choosing socks.
Because they are sandals, it’s fine to wear them barefoot, but since we’re going into the labyrinth, it’s better if she wears something additional.
Couldn’t any socks be fine? Or I shouldn’t say it.
The socks I chose for myself are a bit too big.

“Are these fine?”
“Yes.”
“Thank you.”

Roxanne gives me the socks she chose.
I show them to the store clerk along with the towels and pay for them.

I put in the goods the rucksack on Roxanne’s back.
Finally we go to armor dealer shop.

In the armor shop, Roxanne’s facial expression has become even fiercer compared to a little while ago.
So serious for 1 shield. Her expression has become otherworldly.
Well, that’s because she will entrust her life to it.

Wooden shield: shield
Skill: empty

However, if possible, I would like to choose one with an empty skill slot.
How do I recommend it to her?
I would like to ask Roxanne about empty slots, but it's better not to do it in public.
I place three shields I have found with empty slots.

"These 3 are good items"
"Can you tell them apart?"
"Yea."

To Roxanne's words, I reply with a nod with an appearance of confidence.
All equipment are all one-size-fits-all. That's why they are all the same I think.

Roxanne starts comparing the 3 that I gave to her.
Although a beauty, she gives off an intimidating feeling.
W-with wrinkles between the eyebrows.

I moved away as Roxanne is scary.
I went to the armor display.

"How much is leather armor?"
"It is 800 Nars."

I think it's somewhat expensive.
It cost that much?
I think it would have been a good thing if I had not sold the equipment from the thieves who attacked the village. It can't be helped now.
At that time, I didn't have [Item Box].

"This leather jacket?"
"It is 1,000 Nars."

Buying back what I sold once feels like a loss.
I take and carry the leather jacket and leather gloves with empty slots. I walk over to the headpiece area.
Because I got body, hands and leg equipment, only the headgear remains.

Leather Cap: Head equipment
Skill: empty

Another leather series. Maybe this leather cap is handy.
Appearance-wise, it has a feeling of something a bicycle racer would use as a helmet.
It feels like it won't completely fit on my head.

"Master, this wooden shield."

Roxanne, after choosing the wooden shield, brings it.

"Would it be better together with a leather cap?"

I place the leather cap on Roxanne's head and ask her.
Somehow it mysteriously fits. Magic is amazing.

"Of course."

The cap hides her dog ears completely.
Certainly, it would be necessary without saying it.
It would be terrible if something happened to those cute lop ears.

"Then, these. 5 in all"

I take another leather hat with skill slot and show it to the armor merchant.

"Thank you very much. As a special service, it'll be only 938 Nars."

I pay for them and put them in the item box.

Roxanne looks at me suspiciously for some reason.
I turn to the side so that the armor merchant could not hear and mumble some incomprehensible muttering plus [Item Box]. Instead it seems like Roxanne who was right beside me heard it.
Chanting a spell is troublesome and embarrassing, so I avoid doing it.
Should I do it properly?

"This is everything. Shall we return?"
"Yes."

Roxanne did not say anything in front of the armor merchant.
Even if she thought it was odd, it seems she considered not to ask about it in public.

On the way back, I can see in her eyes that Roxanne wants to say something.
It might be troublesome.

In front of the hotel on way back, there was a clothes shop.
The clothes shop displays expensive cloaks.
Even if they were expensive, because they were necessary, they are not unaffordable.

“If it rains, it will be troublesome, so you should have a cloak. You can buy one that you like.”

I unintentionally change the subject.
She will eventually find out. It shouldn’t be a problem if Roxanne knows.

“Is it all right?”
“Yea.”
“Thank you.”

Roxanne joyfully bows her head.

Chapter 31 – Enjoyment

Long time ago, my mother took me to a boutique in Hiroo, Akasaka.
I don't remember much about places from the past, but it was a luxurious shop in the 2nd or 3rd floor of a building.
I remember you could see the cars going past the expressway from that shop.
In a very clear day, you'd see the sparkling reflection of the sunlight on the cars.

Why was I watching the cars? That's because I had nothing to do.
A boy following his mother for shopping would hardly find anything fun to do.
Probably, I didn't complain or make a fuss then.

My mother only took me once to that boutique.
She learned her lesson from that single time.
That I didn't enjoy going shopping.

I don't know what she expected from having me accompany her that day.
It couldn't be that she expected to have fun shopping after bringing a child.

I no longer hold any duty towards my dead mother.
What should I have done back then?
Should I have enjoyed going shopping with her?

Ever since that time, I learned women like shopping.
And there was no chance to experience it first-hand until today.

Roxanne who was told to buy a cloak she liked joyfully browses the goods.
Every cloak in the store is being checked out.
I should say, literally, every single one is being checked!

Starting from the left, one by one the cloaks on the stand were taken out and checked for fine details.
They were spread for review. She held them against her arms while thinking if it looks good or not; the collars, the hems, and every small detail was checked.
There were no exceptions.

Even that reddish brown one that at a glance was no good was spread out and examined.

Ah, she folds it.
As expected, it was no good after all.

That one, obviously the color was odd.
“Don’t check them one by one!”
It was one of many things I wanted to say, but of course I refrain from doing so.

The merchant attending the store didn’t say anything either.
He didn’t want to say anything awkward.
In Roxanne’s case, even if he asked “What are you looking for?”, she would have answered with “Show me everything”.
Oh, seems he’s saying something.

“I can recommend this one here.”
“…Hmm.”

The ship sank.
Seems, she wasn’t interested in the cloak the merchant showed.
Just now the merchant recommends one that is slightly pricy and remains unsold.
Well done, Roxanne.
For buying a cloak, let’s do it properly.

The merchant, dejected, moved to attend to another customer.
I told her to buy one she likes, but I’d have been happy if she picked and bought one already.

I just stare as Roxanne checks out every cloak.
I don’t remember nor am I aware of any blunders committed towards my mother, but I won’t repeat the same mistakes.
I watch over without uttering any complain.

She’s beautiful and cute. Just by watching her, time flies.
And the result? She asks me “How’s this one?” with the last cloak.

Umm. That question is taboo for someone like me without any fashion sense.
I desperately think of something suitable and let out an evasive “That one is good too”.
I think it’s because I was pleased with the one she showed me, there’s no way to deny it.
That much I know.
Or rather, that much I didn’t know.

After reviewing every single cloak in the shop, Roxanne narrows it down to two choices.
A cloak she held on her left arm since halfway into the selection and the last one chosen.
Both are a similar crimson color.

“Which one do you think is better?”

After thoroughly comparing both, Roxanne turns around.
The cloaks are hanging from both arms.

Probably, if she’s asking me, Roxanne already has in mind an answer with a ratio of 6 to 4.
If I choose, we’ll be done.

If I choose poorly, all efforts will come to nothing.
I understand that proposing the cheap one or such is stepping on a land mine
But, I think the cheap one is good.

The one hanging from her left arm, she’s been holding it all this time.
She’s keeping it because she likes it.
If that is a hint, then it is the correct answer.

Back then, because I was looking at the expressway, I didn’t get the hint.
That’s not the case today.

“This one has a comfortably chic and nice, graceful, calming shade”

With confidence, I recommend the one on her left arm.
The reason is appropriate.
What followed was clear.

Or rather, should I say relaxing shade?
I don't really know what I'm saying.
I say the words without being sweet, mean, or delicacy.

"Is that so? This one, the stitching looks good, but I think the color is a bit too heavy"
"U-Uh huh"

Oh no.
Seems, the color on the other one is better.

"But really, now that you mention it, it's got a good calming color. I understand. Is this one ok?"
"I see. Do you need anything else?"

Somehow she was in agreement.
I receive the cloak from Roxanne.

"No. Well, buying anything more is too much"
"Since we're here, why not buy something else?
"But…"
"You don't need to be reserved. After all, today is a day to celebrate."

I whisper close to her face.
To celebrate the day I bought Roxanne.
More precisely, if I don't buy two items, the [30% discount] won't work!

"Errr… well then, is it ok if I buy underwear too?"
"It's ok."
"I see. Thank you."

With a nod, Roxanne starts choosing some garments.
They're the pumpkin pants I bought before.
They seem to have no distinction for men and women.
They don't have any sex appeal.

Although, it obviously does not have any sex appeal to a modern person.
Unlike the cloak, Roxanne chooses it without unfolding it.
There might be some embarrassment since it's underwear.

"Is only one ok?"

I ask Roxanne who chose relatively quickly without checking.
The case she brought from the Slave Trading company only had a maid uniform in it.
She really doesn't have any personal belongings.

"Eh. Ah, err, but"
"Go buy another piece. How much is it for the three?"

I said that in his absence, so I call for the salesperson.

"Th…thank you"
"Thank you. Three pieces, right, seems you really liked that cloak. That will be 2856 Nars."

We bought three items, including another set of pumpkin pants of the same color that Roxanne took.
After paying, Roxanne held to the cloak and put the underwear in the rucksack on her back.

"Shall we return to the inn?"
"Yes"

And the day was coming to an end.
We didn't buy much, but it took a very long time.
I should be prepared for the time it takes to do any shopping.

"Heya, welcome back."

We return to the Vale Pavilion Inn and pick up the key.

"First we'll return to our room and drop our luggage. After that, dinner.
After finishing the meal, I want to request two hot waters and a lantern."
"Two hot waters and one lantern, isn't it? It'll be 35 Nars, ok?"

After paying the fee, we go up the stairs to the 5th floor to our room.
Roxanne carefully put the cloak in the closet once we enter the room.

“Thank you very much.”
“It’s ok, it’s ok.”

For me, I’m glad I didn’t run away while in the middle of shopping.
I approach Roxanne while she was putting down the rucksack and pet her head.

Yeah. She doesn’t seem to dislike it.
Until now, she hasn’t been frightened either.

“While there’s some sunlight, I’ll do some maintenance. Please bring out the equipment.”

Roxanne told me while I was petting her.

“We spent all day shopping. It’s all right.”
“That’s not good.”

Roxanne suddenly glares at me.
Such powerful eyes.

“Tha…that’s right. That’s to be expected”

Maintenance is so troublesome.
Roxanne takes out a little bottle of olive oil.

“E-errr…”

Roxanne turns around to face me, looking down with hesitation.
Suddenly again, the atmosphere returns to its original state.

“What?”
“Since you bought me some underwear, the ones I’m wearing, I want to use them as cloth scraps for maintenance.”
“Yes. That should be ok.”
“…Master, please go eat dinner first”
“Dinner first, but should I go or not?”

It'll turn dark once we finish dinner.
Maintenance should come first before the meal.
The oil in the lantern will only last one hour.
If possible, I'd rather enjoy some tender love under the lamp light.

"But…"
"It's okay. Let's go down together to eat."
"Is it all right? I think the dining room in the inn is expensive. I can go alone to eat somewhere cheap."

Is she being reserved, or is it unpleasant for us to eat together?

"The dinner fee is already paid for. Are you displeased for us to eat together?"
"Displeased? Not at all!"
"Then, in that case…"

I put down the copper sword on the desk.

"…T-then, well, if you'll excuse me"

Roxanne suddenly starts to take off her trousers.
I was thinking about what she was doing. That's right.
Since Roxanne will do maintenance, she'll use her underwear for repairs. If that's the case, she'll have to take her clothes off.

"Ah, sorry. Don't mind me."

I lightly waved my hand.
Actually I do mind! Mind my feelings.

I'll be able to watch a beautiful sight.
Because of the oversize tunic, I wasn't able to see much.
I was able to peek at her cute bottom, but the part I wanted to see the most…
It's not like I'm watching it from a front row seat.

Ah, A tail. The tail.
Once Roxanne turns away, I could see her tail clearly.
Fluffy fur, the same chestnut color as her hair.

As expected, she has a tail.
I'll get to touch it later.

Roxanne quickly finishes changing her clothes.
It really took just an instant.
I want to see it for longer, but there's no helping it. I can't complain.

Once Roxanne sits on the chair, her expression turns serious.
With an almost scary face, she starts servicing the equipment.
With a little oil dabbed onto a cloth, she polishes.

"If you maintain them like this, you'll keep them just like new."
"If you don't maintain them, will their performance drop?"
"If the user doesn't feel comfortable with it, they can't perform at their best."

I see. It's a problem of feeling.
It should be okay if I don't service Durandal today.

After the maintenance, we go down to the dinner room. We have our meal together.
Besides Roxanne sitting on the floor instead of both of us facing each other at a table for two, we finish the dinner without incident.

Just as we finished eating, the sun goes down.
Once we return to our room, the innkeeper brings the hot water, fire and lantern.
After the man put everything down, he leaves.

"Would you wash my back?"

Since the two of us were left alone, I start to get into action.
Calmly, yet boldly.
If I show embarrassment, Roxanne might get nervous too.

First, I undress.
I also throw off my trunks.
All humans were born into the world naked.
I place the lantern on the desk, and pull the tub to the center of the room.

“Yes, master.”

With a towel, Roxanne wipes my naked back from behind me.
So far, I’ve been successful.
Before, I’d washed myself with a towel soaked with hot water.

“Can you use this?”

I take out the small bag of Koichi fruit I bought and show it to Roxanne.
Because I turn around, my dangly thing said hi to Roxanne.
No, there should be no problem. Probably.
“I don’t think I’ve washed anyone’s body.”

Even though Roxanne must have seen it, there wasn’t a big reaction from her.
It kinda felt lonely down there.

My son is also energetic.
When I went to the restroom before, it accidentally discharged.
“Hmm, is that so?”
“We’re almost done washing your body.”
“About entering a… bathtub.”

Okay, it got translated.

“Only if it’s nobility or royalty”

It seems to be difficult.
As for me, I can use fire and water magic. I might be able to make a bath soon enough.

“How do you use this?”
“If you don’t put it near water…”

I show her the Shukure branches next.
There should be water to rinse your mouth.
That can be done tomorrow.
After drying, I put on my pumpkin pants.

“Then, Roxanne, you’re next.”

As calmly as possible, I casually tell her.
As if it is normal. It is just taking turns.

"…Y-yes."
"Yeah."

Roxanne answers in a whisper.
The tunic hangs from her hand.

As expected, I didn't get to see. Facing the tub, I wring the towel.

"E-errr… I'm from the Wolf Beast tribe and I might be a bit hairy. I'm sorry."
"Oh, really?"

Saying those words, Roxanne turns around.
Right as Roxanne is taking off her tunic.

In the dim light of the lantern, Roxanne's fantastic body is revealed.
In the space between her clothes and arms, there are those violent breasts.

Th-those are destructive.
They're real projectile weapons. It's foul play.

Spilling out from Roxanne's front were those ultimate weapons.
So big.
And they look so soft.
Here are the ultimate weapons that can make whoever looks at them happy.

"Actually, my back…"

Roxanne, hiding her chest from my sight, twists her back towards me.
There's no need to hide anything. That's a shame.

When I see Roxanne's back, her whole back is covered in hair…
What? It isn't hair, is it fur?

While holding the towel, I come closer. She had fur growing from her back.
Though the fur reaches to her lower back, it comes out from her torso.
It didn't extend from her hair.

Unlike the look of a woman with long hair hanging down her back, from her neck down to her lower back, it's all covered in fur.
All the way down to her lower back. It was very short.
If I had to say, it resembles that kind of hairstyle.

Roxanne takes off her trousers and underwear.
Where the fur ends, her tail stretches out.
Even though her tail is covered in fur, her ass doesn't have any.
Her butt is smooth and looks delicious.

I caress the fur on Roxanne's back with my right hand which wasn't holding the towel.
The fur is graceful and soft. It reacts gently to my touch.

"It's soft and fluffy, I love it."
"T-thank you."

I wash the fur on her back with the towel.
Following her body lines; from top to bottom.

"Yea, no problems."
"E-errr. For master to wash me…"
"It's okay. It's faster this way."

Peering through her back, I can see a pair of huge mountains on her chest.
The holy summit, two sacred mountains.

For Roxanne who is wiping herself with the towel, it's impossible to cover herself all the time.

I want to worship.
No, they'll be worshipped.

Hail, Roxanne.
Viva, Roxanne.

It's not enough just to pay respect.
I must revere them.
As if embracing her from behind, I position my hands.
While ascertaining her prominence, I purify those sacred bulges.

“Ah…”
“What?”
“N-nothing…”

Roxanne, who looks like she wanted to say something, keeps quiet.

The Divine Mount Fujis bounce back in reaction.
It is wonderful.
Certainly they have a massive and heavy sensation. I carefully polish them.
There is no part overlooked. I gently wipe to purify the hills completely.
Slowly, carefully and diligently.

So soft.
Even over the towel, I can feel their weight and they are satisfyingly bouncy.
So large.
So much volume they can’t fit in my palms.

“The best!”
“…”

Obviously, I take plenty of time to wipe Roxanne. That’s not a problem at all.
In any case, it’s too magnificent.
So much so that anyone entering wouldn’t want to come out.

I spend enough time wiping to clean her and finally release Roxanne.

“Uh, Can I wipe your tail too?”
“Yes. Ah, no, I can do it myself.”
“It’s okay, let me.”

Instinctively I switch to the next thing to hide the fact that I took quite a lot of time.
I wipe Roxanne’s tail.
Her tail is a big bundle of fur.
As if it didn’t have a core and was just a lump of fur. It was like the tip of a brush.
I can’t get enough of the fluffy feeling of her dog ears. Also, all of the bushy fur of her tail is just as good.
It gently gets coiled around my arm, yet I feel this silky smooth texture.

“T…thank you”
“Your tail, can you move it?”
“It’s difficult, if I don’t do it this way”

While saying that, Roxanne shakes her hips.
Her tail swings side to side.
No. She isn’t moving her tail. It’s clear that she’s moving her hips.
Roxanne sways her hips enthusiastically.

From my point of view, it is sexy.
Even without my point of view, is it still sexy?
I got to see something good.

“Hmmm. I see.”
“Also, when I’m happy, I unconsciously wag my tail.”
“Is that so? Then, I will be sure to make Roxanne’s tail move as much as possible.”

I whisper into Roxanne’s ears.
Even though I say ears, they aren’t like normal ears on each side of the head.

“Y-yes… Errr, please treat me well.”

Ah. She wagged her tail a bit.

After that, I wipe her lovely bum and her graceful feet.
These perks!

“Well then. Let’s do some experiment.”
“Experiment?”
“Yeah, crouch on the bed and put your head out this way”

I instruct Roxanne.
I test if I can wash her head like that.

I wanted to try it previously.
Since there’s no mirror, I couldn’t be sure, but I can guess my hair is all oily and sticky now.
After all, I haven’t washed my hair in more than ten days.
There’s a limit to only using a wet towel.

It might be the common thing in this world, but it is still unpleasant anyways.

I lift the tub and put it on the chair.
The tub is a bit higher compared to the bed. It'll be difficult holding your head up.

"Is this all right?"
"Hold your head over the tub."
"Okay."

Roxanne holds her head over the tub.
I scoop hot water and pour it on Roxanne's head.
I massage and wash her hair with my bare fingers.
I repeat it many times pouring hot water.
I pour more hot water on her ears, and carefully wash them.

"Now then, lift your head."

After washing it all generally, I put a dry towel on her head.
I dry her head with some pressure on the towel.
With somewhat rough strokes, I wipe all the water.

"Thank you."
"Right. With the two of us, we can wash our hair"
"Shall I wash master's hair?"
"Yes, please."

I place the towel on Roxanne's shoulder and we change places.

"Should I change the tub?"
"No, that's okay. The other one, I'll use to wash our socks and clothes"

I put my head in the tub and had it washed.
My hair is massaged and washed by Roxanne's slender fingers.
It feels good.

Even though I was soaked with hot water, I feel refreshed.
I am being dried with the towel.
Once I open my eyes, I am welcomed by the paradise.

Roxanne, who was only wearing a pair of pumpkin pants, shows her front to me while drying my hair.
Both arms are stretched out over my head.
By doing so her breasts were, were, were totally defenseless.

“Then I’ll do the laundry.”

I don’t know if Roxanne realized my gaze, but she immediately moves away.
Too bad.

No.
Roxanne squats beside the tub half naked and is washing our socks.
While doing so, her breast shaking matched her movements.
Pa-Paradise!

“You won’t use Koichi fruit?”
“That’s used for cloaks and favorite outer garments. If used with those that need to be washed daily, they’ll wear out in no time.
“Is that so?”

I am told while lowering the tub from the chair.
I went to the trouble of buying it, but it’s pretty useless.

“This is somehow amazing!”

After the socks, my trunks are washed next and Roxanne is fixated with the elastic band.
She is pulling it with her hands and looks like she is having fun.

“You don’t have those here?”
“Never seen this kind of thing.”
“Really?”

It seems elastic bands are unusual.
Is tying the clothes with strings like the pumpkin pants the common thing?

Roxanne put the laundry in the closet to air out.
Is all the work finally done?

“Well, I’ll put my clothes on.”

Roxanne takes out her maid uniform.

“Ah, you don’t need to wear that.”
“Eh, but…”
“Did they tell you something at the slave market?”
“That you’d be delighted if I wore these.”

Did the slave trader teach something to Roxanne?
Surely I’d be delighted. I’d be delighted but…

“It’s okay if you don’t wear those.”
“Ok…”

Roxanne gives a little nod and puts back the maid uniform into the closet.
And, silently comes closer to the bed.

Once she comes close, I grab her hand and pull her into the bed.
I embrace Roxanne who falls into the bed.

She remains still like that.
While holding her with both hands, those huge bulges are squeezed between our chests.
When I bring her face closer, Roxanne closes her eyes as if she was ready.
I kiss her lips.

Touching those soft lips.
For a while, I keep my mouth pressed against hers.
I want to be more forceful, but I control myself.
I hear it’s not good if put your tongue from the very beginning.

“From now on, we’ll greet each other by kissing just before bed and when waking up in the morning.”
“…Yes.”
“Then once more.”

I let loose and indulge myself.
This time, I try to be more forceful.
I slip my tongue in.
Roxanne seems to accept it honestly.

Our tongues entwine.
While savoring Roxanne’s tongue, I take off my pumpkin pants.
And after, with my hand, I take Roxanne’s pants.
Notes

Chapter 32 - Morning Business

Roxanne seemed to be getting into the mood and kissed me full on the lips.
She whispered into my ear.

“Close your eyes for a minute.”

I closed them, and heard her rustling through her things for a short while.

“You can open them now.”

I opened my eyes to find Roxanne wearing a black leather outfit, holding a whip, and equipped with a rather large strap-on.
My conscience began to fade from shock as Roxanne leaned in to speak.

“The slave trader sends his regards.”

TN: Ok, that’s all that I’ve done for April Fools (it’s a few hours early, but didn’t think you guys would want me to wait.) The rest is the actual chapter. ~Cyro

When I came to, I was hugging Roxanne like a body pillow.
Roxanne slept to my left and I was clinging to her with both hands and my right leg.

Pretty nice way to wake up.
How to put it, a pleasant awakening or being greeted with a pleasant sight after waking up.

Roxanne’s smooth skin feels great.
It is soft and tender to the touch.
Being held by her also feels great.
A feeling of joy permeated into me from the areas in contact with her.
Although my left hand had found it’s way under Roxanne, she wasn’t that heavy and my arm wasn’t numb either.

Lightly hugging her, I stroked her back.
I enjoyed feeling her soft hair.

Both me and Roxanne have nothing on except pumpkin underwear.
Isn't there stuff like bra's? Even if there are, they're probably pretty expensive.
On my left arm there was a weight with definite elasticity.

Suddenly, my lips were covered.
Roxanne kissed me.

She must have surmised my being awake from the movement of my hands.
Which reminds me, I had told her to do something to that effect.
Was she faithfully carrying out my orders?
Being her master's order, she may have been carrying it out since it couldn't be helped.

"Good morning, Master."

Upon releasing her mouth, after enjoying her soft lips and tongue for a while, Roxanne greeted me.

"Thank you. Morning, Roxanne"

I opened my eyes, but could not see Roxanne's beautiful face.
It's still dark.
Relying on my senses only, I took her lips again.
I made do somehow despite the visual impairment.

I inserted my tongue in the gap between Roxanne's lips.
I moved it around invitingly at ease and entangled Roxanne's tongue with my own.
Roxanne responded, though not quite as passionate.

Should be fine to assume that she doesn't dislike it.
Or she might've just put it off as inevitable.
At least it isn't disliked to the extent of runnning away.

Though I want to push her down this instant, I'll endure with a kiss.
Since I held back to a single round yesterday, I'm pretty vigorous.

But these past 10 days, without fail, I visited the labyrinth.
If I don't go out today, it'll be pretty much exposed to the inkeeper as to the

fun I was having last night.
Though it was pretty much exposed from the instant I asked for a double room.
While kissing her, I took my palm to her head and started stroking it.

After enjoying the feeling of sliding my hand through her velvety hair, I released her mouth.

“Let’s go to the labyrinth for a bit.”
“Yes, Master.”

I reluctantly let go of Roxanne and raised my upper body.
In any case we’ll be having fun tonight anyways. Tonight, tomorrow and the day after that.
So long as Roxanne dosen’t run away, that is.

While sitting down and putting on my shoes, Roxanne put on my shirt for me.
Woah. This gives a pretty good feeling.
Sorta sets a kingly mood.

“Sorry for the trouble.”

“Please, there’s nothing of that sort.”
Is she not used to it? Her actions seem pretty awkward.
She hit my arm.
Rather than awkward, isn’t it because the room is pitch dark?

“Will you be fine in the dark?”
“My apologies. My night vision isn’t that great.”
“No need to overdo it.”

I was given my trousers. I’ll put them on myself afterwards.
I took out and equipped the leather jacket from the item box.

Leather Jacket : Body Armor
Skill: Empty

“By the way, do you know what an empty slot is?”

It's been on my mind. Since this is a good opportunity I might as well ask.
Uh, did I just involuntarily mention empty slots?

"What are you referring to, Master?"
"Un. It's about the empty skill slots of my current equipment."
"Equipment, is it? Of course there are gaps and spaces."

That's a typical definition of a slot.

"Equipment can have skills."

"There are empty spaces that can have them."
"I'm sorry. I don't really get it. If there isn't a skill, dosen't it mean there's nothing there?"

Looks like she doesn't understand.
The weapons merchant didn't know about them either.
Typically, empty slots are not known of.

"How is a skill attached to equipment?"
"Well, it is common to buy the skill along with the quipment."
"Not to buy it and attach it oneself."

I take the leather armour from the box.
I want to pass the armor to Roxanne, but I don't know where and what Roxanne is doing as it is dark.
Roxanne might be changing clothes.

"Only a blacksmith master can fuse the monster card."

Seems the job of a Blacksmith master is necessary.
The herbalist job is required to make an antidote. The same sort of thing.

"The monster card is?"
"It is something like an intelligence card which a monster has. When it is fused with equipment, a skill is created. It will rarely remain after defeating a monster."

Oh, so that's how it is.
I can imagine it happening.

“If there is no vacant skill slot, the card is not able to fuse.”
“Whether or not the skill attaches to the equipment depends on the monster card’s status, the skill of the blacksmith master and luck.”
“I see. They also occasionally fail?”
“It is said the probablity of failure is larger.”

I don’t understand. If there are no empty slots on an equipment, does the skill stick?
I who can use appraisal will have a large advtange in that case.
I can perform fusion without failure.

“Do you know how I could become a blacksmit master?”
“I’m very sorry. I do not know. As Blacksmith master is a race-specific job, as I’m not a dwarf, I’m unfamiliar with it.”

Darn! (TL: Gan. Exclamation of dissapointing shock.)
And, there is a dwarf race after all?
Though I have not yet met one.

Or am I able to get the Blacksmith master job through some alternative method?
If it’s a race-specific job, will it be difficult?
When it is a requirement to be a dwarf, it seems difficult to acheive.

“Is that so? Then, there’s no choice but to ask a blacksmith master to fuse the skills to the equipment?”
“A blacksmith master dislikes direct transactions and is not very friendly. Do you have an acquantaince who is a blacksmith master?”
“Is it impossible?”
“The monster card is destroyed when an attempt to use it fails, so most blacksmith masters will not work directly with customers. Even if there is a blacksmith master like that it won’t be certain if you can trust them.

I asked why, and understood.
When a monster card dissappears, they don’t know whether or not it’s a failed fusion or that the blacksmith master is a fraud who cheated them.
When the blacksmith mentor receives a request, he can hide the monster card somewhere and pretend it was a failure.
The client is told it failed, then they fuse the monster card later with another equipment to sell it. A clear profit.

“Is the fusion of a monster card the source of problems?”
“Yes.” (TL: Lit. It is so.)
“Even if the event is witnessed, it’s useless?”
“In the old days, there seems to have been a dwarf who made his assets with the slogan of having the clientss watch before.”
“I see.”

If it is fraud, any method is imaginable.
After all, when a magician cheats at cards, it’s impossible to catch them. I see.

“So there are no cases that fusion with a monster card is requested from a blacksmith master at first. A blacksmith teacher wouldn’t have direct deals, either. You’ll look for a place to sell a monster card, and equipment with a skill will be bought elsewhere.”

Not being able to directly interact will cause doubt and suspicion.

As it is a race-specific job, I won’t be able to take it. As I don’t have the chance for direct deals either, it is troublesome.
Even if I understand that there is an empty slot from appraisal, it is of no use.
Is the appraisal of equipment a useless skill?
Because appraisal has been severely useful in seeing the job of thieves and monsters, It is not something I can complain about.

Is blacksmith master something I could acquire? Even though it’s race specific?
There’s another possibility that has potential.
Do I add a blacksmith master to the party?
Though, if it’s a regular party member then that won’t prevent being cheated.

“A blacksmith Master….” (Tl: Said as an object of desire.)

I try to ask whether it’s possible to add one as a slave, but then stopped.
It may not be a good idea to ask Roxanne.
For a slave, it may be better to ask the slave merchant.
Do I try to visit after money is accumulated to some degree?

I used my intuition in the dark and moved to the door.

“Is it okay to open the door?”
“Yes. It is alright.”

I wait for an answer, then open the door.
The light from the hall lantern enters the room.
It’s dim, but I can make out the room.

“Roxanne, use this leather armor.”
“Ok, Thank you very much.”

I take out some socks and leather shoes to wear.

There is a tub on the floor.
After the activities last night, and rinsing afterwards, there might be some red mixed into the water.
If I leave it as is, when the people of the inn come to clean today they might find out about the enjoyment last night.

I float the wooden cup on the water, and then picked up the tub in both hands and took it to the rest room to empty.
Afterwards I re-filled both with fresh water.

“Roxanne, do you want some water?”
“Oh, yes, thank you.”
Back in the room, I pass the wooden cup to Roxanne.
The lantern from the passage way lights up Roxanne a bit.

Roxanne was wearing the leather armor.
It’s equipment, so it will change shape to fit the person wearing it.
So…. to fit Roxanne….
It’s appearance has become similar to a corset.

The cup size of the chest is huge.
Of course that’s because of Roxanne.

Is this alright?
It’s not alright.

“Here, try wearing this jacket.”
“I’m sorry, Leather armor on it’s own is difficult for women to wear.”

Roxanne apologized.
It seems I did something strange.
Was she afraid to point it out because I am he master?

“No, I’m the one at fault. There’s a lot of common sense that I don’t know, so please teach me.”

I exchange Roxanne’s equipment.
The jacket is fine and doesn’t really show off her figure too much.
Other people don’t need to see that appearance, and if I get excited in the Labyrinth that might be a problem.

“Oh, I didn’t think there were any water jars, where did the water come from?”
“I’ll explain it properly later.”
“Ok.”

I closed the door.
It wouldn’t be good if I’m heard by someone.

“Without using an ointment, is there a skill or magic that can recover health?”

I ask Roxanne.
While in the Labyrinth, I need to think of ways of recovering from attacks.

If it’s just me, it’s alright to recover using Durandal’s HP Absorption.
With Roxanne, I might be able pass her Durandal sometimes to allow her to recover as well.

However, that won’t be good in the long term.
It will cause problems if we only rely on Durandal.
For example, it would be difficult to pass it back and forth during a battle.
We might not have the chance to wait for the next battle before one of us can recover.

It also costs a bit to use ointment.
It would be good to get a recovery job.

“Yes, the jobs of monks and priests can do it.

Thankfully it seems there are recovery jobs.

“Do you know how to become one?”
“Well, I’ve heard they undergo severe training.”
“Oh?”

Training?
I can’t work it out from just that.

“They train in their guilds in various ways, and I hear a waterfall is used.”
“A waterfall.”
“Also, to travel around all 88 guilds on foot.”
“A pilgrimage.”

Roxanne disregards me muttering “Pilgrimage.”
If there is a waterfall, it might be for mental training.
Priests and Monks are religious jobs, and might require some religious experience.
Maybe meditation, or some mystery experience is needed to get a recovery job.

It might be quite difficult.
If it’s some mystery experience, then it’s impossible.
Is even spiritual concentration possible?
“……..” TN: Michio is ranting any religious words he can think of from various religions, Amen, etc. Does not MT well.「かしこみ、かしこみ。南無阿弥陀仏。急々如意令。エロイムエッサイム。アラーアクバル。アーメン」

For the time being, I prayed in various ways.
Even though I tried it, I did not get a new job.

“Strength of mind…” TN: Guessing.「臨・兵・闘……」

I don’t know what else to try.
I need some kind of guide.
I just don’t know.

“……..” TN: More priest lines I think.「羯諦羯諦 《ぎゃーていぎゃーてい》。
のうまくさんまんだーうんたらかんたら」やっぱり全部は知らない。

I don’t have a clue.
Crap.
Is this how far I can get with my knowledge?

Come Roxanne, lets be sad about it together.

“Has God forsaken me?” TN:「神は我を見放した《エロイ・エロイ・ラマ・サバクタニ》」

Chapter 33 - Job

I recite many incantations, but I wasn't able to acquire the healer job.

If I think about it, it is obvious.
If it is so simple to acquire, there wouldn't be any need for training in the first place.
Even if they're called incantations, they sound just like abracadabra.
However, in this world, skills and magic can make things happen.
If they are a simple abracadabra, it would be impossible.
There might be a spell required in order to gain the job.
Isn't there any other way?
"Come to think of it, in order to become a monk, people train to defeat demons barehanded. If that's the case, I think I could be able to do such a thing too."

Roxanne gives me a hint while I was troubled.
I think Roxanne should have told me sooner, but I didn't say anything.
Is there something I can do too?

"Defeat demons barehanded"… what?!
Roxanne is frankly a very scary girl, isn't she?

However, defeating a demon barehanded is a possibility.
A swordsman job is probably acquired by fighting with a sword.
If it's possible to acquire the swordsman job by fighting with a sword, then there would be a job that can be acquired by fighting unarmed.

So, a monk fights barehanded?
Or if monk is not possible, maybe there's a job similar to a bare-fisted fighter.
There's some value in experimenting.

There are many questions
For a fight, is hitting once enough? Or is defeating it necessary?
As for defeating, do you have to do it from the start? Or is delivering the last blow enough?
If it's from the start, do you need to fight alone? Or is it okay engaging with a party?
For now, there's no other choice but to try.

I open the door to the room.
The wooden cup that Roxanne returned I put in the rucksack which I put on my back.
I finish by hanging the copper sword from my waist.

Ah. We haven't formed a party.
I cast [Party Formation].

"Forming a party, how do I do it?"
"Let's see. If I'm not mistaken, I think it's an Explorer's skill."
"Well, that is so, but…"

I was really talking to myself, but Roxanne replies.
In my mind, I add Roxanne to the party.

"Ah."

Roxanne says in a low voice.
Oh. Seems it's done.
Even I know that I had added Roxanne to the party.

Am I added to this party by default?
I tried to add myself to the party, but nothing happens.
Well, after all, it's a party I formed.
I'm uneasy, but for the time being, it should be alright.
It's right to think that because I am a party member, I knew Roxanne was in the party.

"What are the effects of a party?"
"If travel magic is applied to the party, everyone will move together. Even if one loses sight of a party member, one will still know the general direction of them. Also, I've been told the experience is shared."
"It is shared?!"

Is the experience acquired equally distributed?

"When a noble's child is born, the baby is put in a six member party and the five retainers enter a labyrinth. Due to the five people's acquired experience, the baby also grows."

Cheating as expected of dirty nobles.

“Eh? If so, even if you become an adult, one doesn’t necessarily have ever entered a labyrinth then?”
“There are people that make proper use of these vassal groups. However, about people never entering, really…”

Well, is that so. If one doesn’t enter labyrinths, then for what purpose do they level up for?

“About a group of vassals entering, is it possible for one to live from that?”
“Err. Ah… That…”
“Ah… No. I’m not thinking of making Roxanne enter the labyrinth alone.”

As I said that, I realize the reason.

Is there a means to live in comfort with the earnings from making slaves enter the labyrinth?
Well, but that seems pretty troublesome.
You’d be irresponsibly avoiding all work.

“It could be used when one raises their Explorer level, but such talk is pretty rare. Sometimes people at a site where something valuable is discovered in the labyrinth will be disposed of. That’s why, when sending someone to the labyrinth…”

Looks unreasonable.

“I see. Then, shall we go?”
“Yes.”

We go out the room.

Lock it and go down the stairs.
Like always, I entrust the key to the innkeeper.
As usual. Like always.

“Take care.”

We go out.
Like usual, it was pitch black.

“Then, follow me for a bit”

Just to be sure, I take Roxanne’s hand.
I faced the Inn’s wall and cast [Warp].
Like that, we enter.

“Ah? S-say.”

I pulled Roxanne’s hand and came out the labyrinth’s first floor.
Roxanne appears right away.

“It seems to be alright.”
“Eh? Eh? Eh? This is the labyrinth?”

Roxanne seems to be a bit confused.
But, from looking at the surroundings and understanding it was inside a labyrinth, soon her facial expression sharpens.
It is a serious look.
She showed the same look when talking about the labyrinth at the inn. Her facial expression is a bit scary.

“It is the first floor of the labyrinth just outside Vale town”
“But, you can’t use [Dungeon Walk] unless you’re inside a labyrinth… And what’s more, if it’s [Field Walk], you could use it from that place, but couldn’t enter directly into the labyrinth.”

I see.
[Field Walk] can’t transfer you into a labyrinth.

Well, that might be so.
If that wasn’t, there wouldn’t be any reason for an Explorer and Adventurer to share the same party. Rather than bother coming out of the adventurer’s guild wall, transferring directly into the labyrinth is faster.

“As expected, that is the case.”
“In the first place, because Master is an Explorer, you couldn’t be able to use [Field Walk].”

Since Roxanne read my intelligence card, she knows I'm an Explorer.

"This is a travel magic called [Warp]."
"I haven't heard of it."

Seems she doesn't know about [Bonus Magic].

"It seems there are very few people beside me that can use it. That's why keep it a secret."
"Y-yes."
"Please."

I forcibly make Roxanne to agree.

"Master is amazing."

It is forced, but she seems to understand.
Roxanne looks at me with a bit of a respectful look.

"Not really."

It's not bad being stared at by a beautiful girl.
I take out the leather cap from the [Item Box] and place it on Roxanne's head who is looking at me with sparkly eyes.
The leather cap conceals her dog ears. It's a bit of a waste but safety first.
I put on the other one.

"Err. Also the way you use [Item Box] seems a bit different. Is that also a different magic?"
"No, this is just a normal [Item Box]."
"Is that so?"

I take out the leather mittens and pass them to Roxanne.
While having her decide when to wear it, I had her carry the wooden shield too.
I wear the leather gloves, take out the wand and we are finished preparing.

I felt like Roxanne had an odd expression when she saw the wand.
However she didn't say anything.
As expected, she's being reserved in regards of her master.

“Is a wand a weapon a Wizard uses?”
“Yes, that’s what I’ve heard.”
“Do you know if it increases magic attack power or not?”
“I don’t know. I’m sorry. I don’t know the details. I didn’t know anyone who could use magic.”

Seems you can’t become a Wizard if you aren’t rich.

“I see. Do you know about Intelligence?”
“Is it about being smart?”
“No. Well, something like that, but…”

How should I say it?

“Like talking about brains?”
“Is Intelligence what increases Magic Attack?”
“Does being smart raise your Magic Attack?”

She replied back with a question.
Is there no knowledge about Status and Parameters?

“Like when you level up, things like Intelligence rises.”
“Speaking of levels, are you talking about Explorer levels?”
“Well, that’s ok too.”
“Even if you level up Explorer, I don’t think you’ll particularly get smarter.”

How should I say it, seems like the conversation isn’t leading anywhere.
I give up about Intelligence. Should I ask other thing?

“Hmmm. And Roxanne, have you entered any labyrinth?”
“Yes. Around three sites.”
“The labyrinths, does every one have the same look?”

I’ll gather information about the labyrinths.
I’ll have her teach me everything she knows about labyrinths. It’d be good if she is able to answer as much.
Is it better if I ask specific questions?

“That’s right. Master is an Explorer. After all, I think you should know, but…”

"… No. It's because I haven't entered many."
"Is that so?"

Still, is it okay for her to teach me everything?

"Say. Demons don't come out in this room, isn't it?"
"Demons don't come out in the rooms where you can use [Dungeon Walk]. I don't know about Master's magic."
"In that case, it is okay. Because this is the first room after entering the first floor."

I point Roxanne towards the black wall behind us.
The wall that leads to the entrance and other levels.

"Yes. That looks like it."
"Then, we'll leave this room, but I'd like you to help me with some experiments first. I think Roxanne will get to fight later. Don't get too nervous."
"Understood. It's alright with me."

Somehow, it seems really alright.
Or perhaps, should I say, she seems more composed than me.

The experiments I told Roxanne are just simple tests.
What happens if I raise the parameters with the bonus points from the [Character Reset]?
Since until now, I've been giving priority to exploration to gather funds, so I haven't tried it yet.

First, I assign 99 points to raising Intelligence.
I cast [Character Reset] and fiddle with it.

Incidentally, I look at the [Bonus Skills].
Among the [Bonus Skills] are [Level Limit Unlock], [Damage Limit Unlock] and [Party Entries Unlock]. These three Unlocks were right next to each other.
[Level Limit Unlock] and [Damage Limit Unlock]. Somehow I can understand.
Since I don't think I'll be restricted for a lowly Explorer Lv27, I just leave it alone.

However, I wonder what is [Party Entries Unlock]?
When I was solo, it was out of the question, but now I'm in a party with Roxanne.
It's possible that we'd be obstructed by some restriction.

In the [Character Reset], I check the [Party Entries Unlock] option.
The [Character Setting] screen got refreshed.

It seems a few new entries were installed.
In [Bonus Magic], [Partylization] was added.
What's that? Is it for the party?
Is it for inserting someone in the party?
Is that Party formation?
For now I'll check the option.

[Bonus Skills] was changed too.
[Job Setting] now changed into [Party Job Setting].
It isn't checked. Seems it isn't useful yet.

I check it and gain [Party Job Setting].
As expected, it costs 2 bonus points.

I finish the [Character Reset] and cast [Partylization]
Besides not knowing how to use it, there's no other way than to test it.
It's unreliable, but it shouldn't be a dangerous magic.

After casting, I knew what it was requesting.
That thing is probably an item.
Isn't it a magic that gives the item's effect to the whole party?

"Roxanne, did you feel anything strange?"
"What is it?"

It seems there wasn't any change in Roxanne's case.
It looks like only the user is affected.
Well, is it natural?

Next, I look at Roxanne and cast [Party Job Setting].
The jobs came to my mind.

Beast Soldier Lv6, Villager Lv8, Farmer Lv1, Warrior Lv1, Swordsman Lv1, Explorer Lv1.

These should be the jobs Roxanne has.
Seems I can seriously change them.
It's great that she doesn't have the Thief series job.
It means that she has never stolen anything since she was born.

Beast Soldier Lv6
Effects: [Agility Medium Increase], [Stamina Small Increase], [Skill Small Increase]
Skill: [Beast Attack]

Looks like Beast Soldier's effects are good.
It's ok to leave it like that.
Being able to change party member's jobs, depending on how you use it is a fairly powerful skill.

Unfortunately, [Character Reset] didn't become a [Party Character Reset].

"Then, let's go."
"Err. I think it's a good idea to lease a Magic Crystal"

Roxanne and I stay in the small room when we were about to leave.

"Eh? What?"
"A Magic Crystal."
"Magic Crystal?"

Roxanne nodded.

"Erm. Demons hold magic power. When you defeat a demon, that magic power, little by little, is collected in a Magic Crystal. The collected magic power after being sold can be used as an energy source for the Guild Temple and other things."
"About leasing them."
"If you aren't carrying a Magic Crystal, you won't collect the magic power from defeated demons."
Seems it is something I haven't done.
Up till now, I haven't carried one.

“In short, if you are carrying a Magic Crystal, you’ll collect magic power while defeating demons.”
“Yes”
“By any chance, can a Magic Crystal be sold for a lot of money?”
“That is so, from the items you can get in a labyrinth, I think it is the most expensive.”

W-what did you say?

“…It that so?”
“Ah, no. It can be sold for a lot, but magic power is something you can only collect little by little. A Magic Crystal is not something you sell many times in a lifetime. Even if you haven’t carried one until now, it isn’t a big loss. It’s alright.”

She takes into consideration that I look depressed.

“How do you get a Magic Crystal?”
“You can find one in a labyrinth or if you go to the Explorer’s Guild, you can buy one that’s been emptied of magic power.”
“Then we’ll go buy one later. I haven’t seen something like that in the labyrinth so far.”

I think I haven’t seen a Magic Crystal here yet.
Or, even if I saw one since I didn’t know, did I ignore them?

“This labyrinth, isn’t it relatively new since it’s been found?”
“I’ve heard that. Seems it’s just over 10 days old.”
“In that case probably there’s no Magic Crystal. Because it takes time for the magic power to gather and crystallize.”

So I didn’t simply let one pass?

“About earning money from the labyrinth, is there any other way besides item drops from demons and Magic Crystals?”
“There are Treasure Chests.”

Ah. As expected, there were Treasure Chests?

“I don’t think I’ve seen one.”
“I think there are very few in a new labyrinth. Even if there is, they’re higher up.”
“Up?”
“Yes. It’s the place one aims towards while advancing the exploration. I think if taken from the position of one that just got in.”

It wasn’t down, but up?
I had the image that the labyrinth spread underground, but…
There are many inconsistencies with that.

“Never mind. Well then, where should we go?”

The right one is to go to the second floor, but I wasn’t really aiming to explore.
Then, let’s go look in the middle.
When I was leaving, Roxanne stopped me.

“Master, the demons are closer on the left side.”
“Eh? You can tell?”
“Yes. I can smell them.”

What’s that?

“Is it because you’re from the wolf beast tribe?”
“Even among the wolf beast tribe, my nose is very effective. I pride myself on detecting demons.”
“Amazing.”
“Thank you.”

We advance left, choosing among the passages leading left, right and center.
A Needle Wood appears not one minute after walking.

Amazing, Roxanne.
Good looks, good in bed, good in the labyrinth.
She fills three important requisites.

“Really amazing.”
“Here it comes.”
“No, wait a second.”

I stop Roxanne who was heading towards the Needle Wood.
I cast [Fire Ball].

“Eh?”

Roxanne raises a confused voice.
A fireball appears over my head.

Chapter 34 – Secrets

Needle Wood Lv1 is crushed with 1 blow from [Fireball] with bonus points poured in until Intellect increased to 99.
If I don't allocate anything, it surely needs 2 to 3 shots.
I have no doubts that the magic attack power has risen due to Intellect's increase.

I don't think the size has changed, but the speed has increased.
If the movement velocity increases then it becomes difficult to dodge.
A welcome change.

Even if Intellect is increased to the max, it only gets bigger by approximately one size? That's as much as it gets.
In my case, looks like it doesn't change much.
To take it down in 1 blow, the power still increases, so there is no problem.

"Eh? Eeh? Eeehhh? … Is-isn't this magic?"

Roxanne, who sees my magic, is a bit confused.

"It's magic."
"Isn't Master an [Explorer]? But I have not heard that an [Explorer] can use magic."

But, she soon regains her composure.
Her facial expression returns to the serious expression she had when we entered the labyrinth.
As expected, it seems that there are not many people who can take up a second job.

"Well, this is also a secret."
"It's a se-secret?"

I'm deceiving her by keeping everything a secret.
Actually, it is useless to explain.
Would she understand that second job is applied by [Character Reset]?

"Do you understand what [Character Reset] is?"
"Re…set?"

“What about Bonus Points?”
“Is it something specially received as a reward?”
“Umu.”

After all, explanation is impossible.

“S-Somehow I don’t understand it, but being able to use magic is amazing.”
“Thanks.”
“Moreover, being able to defeat a monster with one blow from magic is amazing. Magic has more power than a sword, but I heard that defeating in one blow is somewhat difficult.”
“Well it’s not always one blow. Just don’t lose focus now.”

I think Roxanne is the type that doesn’t lose much focus in the labyrinth.

Roxanne goes to the place where the Needle Wood fell and picks up the branch.
I take it from the rucksack where she tries to place it.

“Erm. I will carry that.”
“It’s fine. There is still space in the [Item Box].”

I put the branch in the [Item Box].

“There is space? Erm. Excuse me, if it’s fine, I would like to ask what Master’s level is?”
“[Explorer]? It’s Lv27.”
“Lv27 … Amazing … Certainly, if that is the case, then there is space.”

I can put in the [Item Box] a number of items equivalent to the level.
It seems Roxanne also knows this.

However, Roxanne who was thinking “But we’re almost the same age”, was she pondering what my level could be?
Even though she was not at a price a low level could afford.

Is it that? Does she think that I spend my parents’ money?
The usual son who comes from afar, living on his parents’ inheritance.
It’s probably become an excuse for my lack of common sense.

My level, it could be summed up as a bit high if you look at my age, but not to the extent that it's impossible.
For 200x Experience over 10 days of entering the labyrinth, holidays aside, that is just under 6 years' worth.
Aren't there children who enter a labyrinth from 11 years old in this world?
When I think about raising levels, I don't know what will happen from now on, but…

"About my level, keep it a secret."
"Of course."

But since she asked, it is alright to tell her though it is discourteous.
As expected, Roxanne knows how important privacy is.

"Well then, where should we go?"
"Is it fine to go to a place where there are monsters?"
"Because I don't want to be seen using magic by too many people, if possible, I would like a place where there are no people."
"Understood. Because it's a secret."

It seems that she understands it is a secret.
Because it is an order, she seems to be giving precedence to maintaining secrecy.

However, it is amazing that she can easily acknowledge the direction of places without people.
If she recognizes the smell of monsters, it can be said she also can smell people.

"I am relying on you. Roxanne is really useful."
"Thank you very much. This way."

Roxanne guides me.

"Can you tell monster types and numbers by the smell?"
"I can tell to some extent, but not perfectly. Also, I can't tell by the smell if they're on the other side of a hidden door, so monsters may appear along the way. I can't always know what the shortest route to *the monster is."

While advancing and talking with Roxanne, we soon arrive at the place with monsters.
She is really useful.
This time, I raise my intellect to 50 points and fire a [Fireball].
Needle Wood Lv1 endures the hellfire.

“Not good enough?”
“Please, leave it to me.”

Roxanne pulls out her scimitar.
She runs off without waiting for my reply.

This is unexpected.
Even though 2 [Fireball] shots would have been enough.

Roxanne enters the space between me and the monster to finish it off, so I can’t shoot magic.
I can’t expect the [Fireball] to pass through party members.
Since [Firestorm] did not work on the thieves, then probably it will not work on party members.

Roxanne swings her sword which is held in her right hand and slashes the Needle Wood.
She steps aside to avoid the swung branch.
She targets the shoulder of the monster that just missed. Like that, she lands a single cut.
Roxanne again easily avoids the branch swung from the right.
She steps in and swings the scimitar down from the front.
The swung branch is avoided with half a step. While avoiding, she lands a hit.

Amazing.
I stare for a little bit.
Roxanne perfectly avoids the Needle Wood’s attacks.
It doesn’t feel like the monster’s attacks hit.

She doesn’t just easily avoid them; the avoiding distance is paper thin.
She evades the monster’s attacks by centimeters, no, it’s millimeters.

At a simple glance, it looks like there isn’t much margin, but it’s actually the opposite.

If avoiding by a lot, it results in wasted movements. Shifting to attack becomes difficult.
If one can perfectly see all enemy attacks, then just barely dodging them is best.
Roxanne's movements are exactly that.
She looks like she's dancing magnificently.
She is avoiding with light steps or turning her body to let them go past.

Are the Needle Wood's attacks so predictable?
Well certainly with the branches.

I put the wand on my waist, drawing the copper sword, and I also engage.
Because Roxanne is present, there's time to switch weapons.
There might be even enough time to bring out Durandal.
I'll do that starting from the next one.

I join the battle with the copper sword.
I take up position a little bit apart from Roxanne on the left side and swing down my copper sword.
I receive a branch swung from the left.
I deflect the branch from the right.

The branch that misses Roxanne due to her dodging approaches me.
I avert my upper body in a hurry.
With my posture about to collapse, from the left, the branch is swung.
Somehow, with the copper sword, I receive it.

Yeah. To say it plainly, it is unreasonable.
It is not easily avoidable for me unlike Roxanne.

Moreover, Roxanne is slashing many times in the meantime.
I also find a chance and drive in my copper sword.

The Needle Wood collapses.
It drops a branch, becomes smoke, and disappears.

"A-amazing. You avoided all of the attacks."
"Thank you very much. Because we're in a party of two, I wasn't worried."

Not at all. When you are alone, you dodged everything, isn't it?

“Is that so?”
“If you look properly, that level of attack can be dodged.”

That might be so.
However to be frank, I don’t think anyone can do it.
Roxanne is an amazing person, isn’t she?
Even knows the monsters’ whereabouts.

“Going to the next monster, I want you to leave it to me.”
“Got it.”

The way things are going, I’ll be taken lightly as a master.
Although, I can use magic.
I feel like I should show her a fight with some impact.

Generally, Roxanne’s movements feel almost like a demi-god.
That is impossible for a normal person.
At least, it is impossible for me.
Since there is [Overwhelming], I might be able to imitate her a little bit.

So, I might say Roxanne is always in a state of [Overwhelming].
Perhaps she’s really using it, isn’t she?

“Regarding [Beast Attack], what kind of skill is it?”

Beast warriors possess [Beast Attack] skill.
It might have an effect similar to [Overwhelming].
By the name, I think it is an attack skill.

“It is a technique that deals a large amount of damage to monsters.
However, I’m sorry. I cannot use it.”
“Can’t use it?”
“All skills and magic incantations are in Brahim language. Since ancient times, due to the Brahim language’s power of words, it has been treated as a sacred language. A person who can’t speak the Brahim language can’t use skills.”

Is that how it is?
It seems that Brahim language is a useful language.

To use skills, one must learn Brahim language.
It has become a common language.

“But, it seems you have reached a point where you can speak Brahim language.”
“Yes. However, it is still insufficient.”
“Don’t understand things like incantations?”
“No, since the incantations needed to use skills appear in the mind. However, the differences in pronunciation, accent, intonation, minute nuances, etc., if they’re not all perfect, the incantation will be unsuccessful. Not only to the extent of daily conversation, but if you aren’t completely fluent in the Brahim language, using skill incantations is impossible.”

Come to think of it, I understand that incantations somehow appear in my mind.
This seems to be the same for other people.

“Is that so?”
“When using a skill, one must make an opportunity to chant the incantation. Not being able to use skills is not a big problem. For a beginner like me, it is not good to use skills.”
“I see.”

I guess for a vanguard to use attack skills, that is the case.
I don’t think Roxanne is a beginner.

“Errm. Is it fine to listen to one?”
“What?”
“When Master uses magic, there is no chanting of incantations. I thought chanting was necessary for skills and magic.”

Crap.
My asking about skills has brought trouble upon me.

“It’s not something I can teach. I think it’s impossible with the exception of me. Keep it secret.”
“Certainly.”
“Umu.”

I already feel bad keeping everything secret.

“As expected, Master is amazing. Also, you’ve mastered the Brahim language so easily. People who master the Brahim language are really amazing.”

Roxanne intensely gazes at me.

I am a bit embarrassed. Since the ability was bestowed to me.
I don’t really understand why I can speak the Brahim language.

“Oh, really?”
“Yes…”

I pull myself together and move on with Roxanne in the lead.
While following, I take out Durandal.
For other skills, I set [Required Experience 1/5] and [Experienced Gained x10].

Bonus skills are a reduction in necessary experience and an increase in acquired experience.
While together in a party, the [Experience Gained] may be divided between the party members.
The [Required Experience] might just work only for me.

In few minutes, we arrived at a place with monsters.

“As expected, Roxanne is amazing!”
“Am I?”

Until now, I had been walking around randomly, waiting to encounter monsters.
The difference in efficiency is overwhelming.

“Hmm. By the way, have a look at my sword. What do you think about it?”
“It is a very splendid sword.”

I show Durandal to Roxanne.
The answer isn’t quite what I wanted, but she understands that it’s a good sword.

I charge towards the monster.
While running I raise Durandal and strike at the Needle Wood Lv1.
In a single blow, the monster is defeated and disappears into smoke.

“In a s-single blow, Master is amazing.”

Roxanne has a slightly bewildered expression as she picks up the branch.
It’s an unprecedented good feeling to have such a beautiful woman looking at me.
After all, I can rely on Durandal.
I think Roxanne’s impression of me has gone up.

“Well, but it is the sword that is the amazing one.”
“It’s definitely a good sword. Also, it is properly maintained and it looks just like new.”

Roxanne inspects Durandal while I’m holding it up.
Durandal’s condition seems to have been acknowledged by Roxanne’s judgment.
If I think about it, whenever I use [Character Reset], it probably appears as brand new.
Otherwise, despite me having thoroughly used it, it would not be in great condition unlike the scimitar and copper sword which are almost unused.

Roxanne was angry at the condition of the scimitar and copper sword.
I don’t know how they were used before I got them though.

“This sword is a secret.”
“It’s a secret?”
“Well, if people find out about this sword….”

I take Roxanne’s hand and pull it.
I turn my hand towards her neck, and motion it like a sword.
“Eh?”
“Give me the sword or I’ll kill this woman! That sort of thing might happen.”
“Ye-yes. That is certainly so. I understand.”
“Yes.”

I let Roxanne go.
With a slight threat, I think she won’t treat a secret irresponsibly.
There really is a possibility.

“However, if a time comes when that happens, please choose the sword without holding back.”
“Well, I’ll be choosing Roxanne, but… I want to try and avoid getting into a situation where I could lose either.”
“Certainly. …Well, thank you very much.”

If she understands that there is such a possibility, she will not talk about it.

After that, we try a few things.
Testing objectives are: First, I want to calculate the smallest number of bonus points I need to increase Intellect by to defeat a Needle Wood Lv1 with one spell.
The fourth and fifth jobs are set to [Merchant] and [Herbalist] since they both have small intellect increases as part of their job stats.
And then, I want to test if there is a change in how many bonus points I need to increase intellect by to defeat a Needle Wood Lv1 with one spell.
If the necessary bonus points decrease, then match the effect of adding a job with small intellect increase.

The results:
Probably, the effects of the fourth and fifth jobs properly overlap.
It probably wouldn’t change even if I added [Warrior] Lv16. Since the small stamina increase from [Warrior] probably isn’t related to magic attack power.
Even if I add [Swordsman] Lv2, they probably wouldn’t decrease. Perhaps the manifested effects are only the added parts (or the positive stats).
It’s only a possibility because even if I have the same bonus points allocated, sometimes a monster will be defeated and sometimes it won’t.
There seem to be individual differences between the monsters.
Or, perhaps the correlation between the magic damage and intellect isn’t constant?

However, the fact that with the same points sometimes they’re defeated and sometimes not, there’s a use for it.

“Alright, I will defeat it bare handed.”
“Okay.”

Even if the monster isn’t defeated in one shot, it is nearly dead and easy to defeat.
I put away the Wand, and attack it together with Roxanne.

Roxanne attacks the Needle Wood Lv1 from the right, and I attack from the left bare-handed.
I punch its bark, but was it damaged?

A branch swings from the left.
I move my body roughly and narrowly avoid it.
I jump back two or three steps and nearly fall on my butt.
Since I'm not using the sword and I'm in close to the monster, it feels like quite a serious fight.

Roxanne brilliantly dodges the Needle Wood's attacks.
I wonder how she avoids it so easily.

Damn.
Maybe it's better to kick in this situation.
I turn sideways and kick it.
After the kick, I drive in a punch.
It swings a branch at me again.

No good, I can't avoid it.
In exchange for three jabs, I receive one hit myself.
I continue with a right straight punch delivered with all my might.

The body of the Needle Wood shakes violently.
After a little while, it begins to crumble.
The monster disappears into smoke.

I cast my [Job Setting].
Was that fine?

Hu? There is nothing.
Next is [Party Job Setting].

[Beast Soldier] Lv6, [Villager] Lv8, [Farmer] Lv1, [Warrior] Lv1, [Swordsman] Lv1, [Explorer] Lv1, [Herbalist] Lv1, [Monk] Lv1.

Roxanne got it.

"Did you get in the last blow Roxanne?"
"Yes. After Master hit it, it fell when I attacked with a thrust."

Really? I didn’t see it.
Apparently you need to land the finishing blow to acquire the Monk job.

Chapter 35 – Monk

It appears that one needs to defeat a monster barehanded to gain the Monk job.
Roxanne, who delivered the finishing blow, acquired the job, but my jobs didn't increase even though I participated in the battle.
There's no helping it; to acquire the Monk job, we'll have to continue with the experiment.

"I'll deliver the finishing blow. Roxanne, just encircle it, but don't attack."

I take on the Needle Wood that didn't fall down after being shot with magic.
There have been instances where they're defeated with a single shot, so it must have sustained considerable damage.

Even saying so, facing it alone is pretty dangerous.
Or perhaps, impossible.
We both surround it.
Doing so, I'll only receive half the attacks.

Whoa.
Sometimes the branches that miss Roxanne can reach me too.

I don't know if a Needle Wood has a front or back side.
After all, it can swing its branches and attack in any direction.
As expected of a strange wooden man.
I have a hunch that we don't have an advantage surrounding it from the front and back.
However, it does decrease the number of attacks from the monster.
In reality, I'm the only one attacking, but I'm not the only target of the Needle Wood.

No matter how you look at it, Roxanne is stronger than me.
Seems it can't ignore her.

Roxanne, as usual, is avoiding the monster's attacks by a paper-thin margin.
The Needle Wood's branches are completely missing her.
What's with those movements?

Roxanne lightly moves aside, avoiding the monster's attack.
Once a gap is open, I give it a punch.
It swings its branch; I avoid it with large movements.
Its upper body is knocked back, but the monster aims for Roxanne.
Roxanne, again, easily avoids the thrown attack.

Since some time ago she's been doing it repeatedly.
Occasionally it's different; the monster's attack hits me.
Of course it misses Roxanne.

Possibly, from the Needle Wood's point of view, it looks like its attacks are hitting Roxanne, or maybe not.
At a glance, it doesn't look like a close battle.
That's if you see everything perfectly.

Since I'm the only one attacking, the battle takes a long time.
After the jab, I hit one, two straights.
I transfer force to it by rotating my hips.

It's not like it isn't taking damage from my fists.
I avoid a swung branch in a hurry.
There's a chance when the opponent misses, but since I messed up my posture, I can't follow up with a counterattack.

Next, the monster attacks Roxanne, but misses.
I simply use [Rush] here when it counts.
I take a step forward and another. I throw a straight punch while advancing another step.

Finally, the monster falls down.
I overcome this long mortal combat.
Of course, this mortal combat was between me and the Needle Wood.
Since I was the only one attacking, I'm certain I delivered the finishing blow.
I cast [Job Setting].

Monk Lv1
Effects: [Mind Small Increase] [MP Minute Increase]
Skills: [Medical Treatment]

This is it.
I set the job immediately and use [Medical Treatment].

The top of my shoulders are in pain because I got hit by the monster's attack several times.

"Certainly, the pain has subsided. From now on, if you suffer the attack of a monster, I can use a skill to heal it, so make sure to always tell me."

I inform Roxanne.

"You can do that?"
"Yes. Keep that a secret."
"I… I understand. Master is amazing."

Roxanne can speak fluently in the Brahim Language, but…
Generally, I have the feeling she's told me a lot of times that I'm amazing since a while ago, but it's only because I have multiple jobs.
I feel like a fraud.
From my chat with Roxanne, it seems the monk's skill can only cure light injuries.
In case of large wounds like getting an arm cut off, the higher tier nourishment tablets are necessary.
But in short, it can be managed somehow or another with money. I'm relieved.

After further verification, we return through the wall in the Adventurer's Guild.

Also we properly verified if wands have effects.
[Fire Ball], [Fire Storm], [Breeze Ball], [Sand Ball], their power probably isn't increased.

I increased my Strength to 99 with bonus points, and swung a copper sword, but I couldn't beat it with a single strike.
Basically, magic has more power than a sword.
I wonder how powerful Durandal is.

After returning to the Inn, I eat breakfast with Roxanne.
Then, once we entered our room.

"It's very helpful having Roxanne around. I'm counting on your help from now on."

I expressed my thanks to her after sitting on the bed.
Honestly, she's really helpful.

First, having the ability to search for monsters, we could find them quickly.
I haven't ever defeated as many monsters in a single exploration as we did this time.
To an extent, we didn't spend a long time inside the labyrinth. We only explored the first level, but we got every monster. Furthermore, for experimentation and acquiring the Monk job, one portion was spent in pointlessly long battles.

Inside the [Item Box] there are two slots full of branches and a third with a single branch.
Explorer is Lv27 now, so [Item Box] can stack up to 27 of the same item in a slot.
To sum it up, this morning's exploration earned us 55 branches.
Additionally, we got 6 leaves.

Also, with Roxanne, I can let her be the vanguard and safely attack with magic.
Today, Roxanne didn't get hit by any monster's attack.
She effectively dodged everything.

While in the company of Roxanne I can bring out Durandal.
Any time I want, I can use Durandal to absorb MP from an enemy, so efficiency has gone up.

"Yes. Thank you. I look forward to working with you."

Roxanne bows her head while standing at the room's entrance.
Even if she lifts her head, it doesn't look like she'll move from there.

"I'll be counting on you."
"This is the first time I've defeated so many monsters. Master is amazing!"
"No. It's my first time too. It's thanks to Roxanne guiding me. Roxanne is the amazing one!"
"That's not true. We defeated so many because of master's overwhelming strength. And you did many amazing things."

Somehow, we end up praising each other.

“Now, come sit here.”
“Y… yes.”

I beckon Roxanne.
Looks like I have to tell her to do everything.

“From now on, inside the room, you can sit whenever you like. Or, it’d be good if you were close to me whenever possible, as in sitting beside me. It’s not like I’ll push you down if you sit beside me, errr, I can’t say absolutely not, but I won’t do it much.”

Because Roxanne came next to me, I want to embrace her very much.
I can’t endure it any more.
I peek down the neck of her tunic at her unreasonably seductive white skin.

“I… It’s all right. I don’t mind it, ah…”

Because she said such a pleasant thing, I may have spontaneously embraced her.
I think now Roxanne is at fault.

Saying I don’t mind, do you mean us lying down in bed?
Ah. Or does she mean it’s all right if we just stay like this?
Dammit!

It can’t be helped. In exchange for not getting laid, I’ll calm down by playing with her dog ears.
They’re elastic and soft; they feel good.

“May I taste them?”
“Ehh. T-that… I don’t think they’ll be tasty.”

No, I’m sure they’ll be delicious.
Ahh, what am I saying?

Roxanne looks troubled as she hangs her head down.
That’s not it.
I won’t eat them.
I want to eat them, but not in that way.

“I’m not really going to eat them, just play with them.”

Just hold them in my mouth and taste their sweetness.

“Y-yes.”
“Is it ok if I touch your ears this way? If in any way you feel displeased or in pain just tell me. I’ll stop.”
“As long as you don’t do anything strange, it’s all right. Besides, well… It feels good when you caress them.”

Roxanne, whispering that while averting her gaze, is extraordinarily cute.
As expected, it’s ok for me to eat them?

However, her dog ears are reminding me of something.
A puff of baby powder, that’s not it. Something edible.
Not a cream puff, sponge cake, or marshmallows. Something more springy.

That’s it, Isobeyaki. [4]
These droopy ears have the stretchy feeling of fried mochi rice cake.
They’re floppy and dangle helplessly.
They are moderately elastic and soft, being very charming to the human heart.
Isobeyaki?
It’s a food I like, but I might not get to eat it again in this lifetime.
I wonder whether or not there’s mochi, soy sauce, and nori seaweed in this world.

“Do you know if one can find Isobeyaki in this region?”
“Isobeyaki?”
“Yes. It is a food I like from my home town”
“I don’t know about this region, but if we go to the ocean, I think we can grill and eat some fish at the beach.”

That’s the literal meaning of Isobeyaki.
Maybe, it’s translating literally into Brahim language.
So, even if it’s translated, some concepts don’t necessarily exist.

“Is that so, well, let’s try searching for it?”
“Er-errmm. …Master, will you someday return to your home town?”

Roxanne asked.
As expected she's curious.

"My home town?"
"Yes."
"Rather than returning to my hometown, I've acquired something even better."

We chat while I keep playing with her dog ears.
This place isn't Japan. But there's a nice substitute for Isobeyaki.
I got the best dish. It's soft, smooth, and springy.

"…"
"I won't return to my hometown. Probably, I can't return."

Because Roxanne has gone silent, it seems I gave her too serious an answer."
I know it's something I must think about.

"Really?"
"Yeah. If I had to return to my home town, unfortunately, I'd have to release Roxanne."

I lift her ears with my hands and flap them around.

"No, well. That was not my intention."
"It's okay. I understand."
"I think it is normal to sell a slave that is no longer necessary."

I see. Is that common sense?
Is Roxanne anxious because she's afraid of being sold?

"I intend to be with Roxanne forever."
"Okay. Thank you."
"However, because it only makes sense to aim to increase the party's battle potential, I plan to increase the number of party members!"

I make my harem declaration in a roundabout way.
I'm just saying that I'm increasing the party members, without mention of increasing the harem members.

Even if it's inevitable that the vanguard will be some muscular middle-aged man, the rear guard must be a collection of pretty girls, don't you agree?
I think that's common sense.

"Yes, that's to be expected."

I don't know how much Roxanne understands. I interpret it that she gave her consent.

I'm not sure if it's really reasonable or not to increase your party members.
Gathering more party members would mean that from now on, we will get our income by exploring labyrinths.

However, are there any other ways?
It's troublesome.
Agriculture, cuisine, trading, transportation, etc., it's not like I have special knowledge of things useful in this world.
Developing something based on modern knowledge, I don't know if it would work or not.

In the past, I read the biography of James Watt.
Speaking of business, he seems to have been successful but through suing for patent infringement against his rivals.
I don't think there's something like the concept of patents in this world.

Assuming there's potential, should I make Roxanne a midwife?
I think the work of midwives is mostly done by females.

When delivering a baby, one would disinfect their hands with lime water.
Scissors and other tools would be disinfected with boiling water.
The sheets and towels can be hung up and disinfected by the sunlight.

This way, you can reduce the rate of deaths from postpartum infections by a large margin.
The day would be close when miscarriage gynecology becomes standard medical care in this world.

But as a practical question, it's not very realistic.
First, it would be difficult for Roxanne to be a midwife.
Midwives for humans, wolf people, elves, and dwarves might be different.

The rate of postpartum infections might be different even if you could help different species.
Here, does a midwife need to wash their hands in water boiled with medicinal herbs before the delivery of the baby, or some other existing custom? This one is out.

Besides a midwife, maybe form a musical band with Roxanne playing a musical instrument or singing.
It would be good if I can turn some famous music from the modern world into hits in this world.
Trendy music, oldies, children's songs, pop, classics, etc. that I've listened to amount to 100 to 200 pieces. Probably I wouldn't have any problems for a lifetime here.

But, it would be difficult since I can't read sheet music or play a musical instrument.
It would be shameful to rely completely on Roxanne.

Since I learned that I can change the jobs of party members, in the worst case, that would become my work.
It's really the worst case, but…
If I work on changing jobs though, I would be revealing some of my abilities. There would be people approaching me, aiming for the ability, and I fear I'd be dragged into trouble.
If possible, for my safety, let's abandon that.

After all, isn't getting income from the labyrinth the steadiest so far?
That's what my abilities are for anyways.

There are benefits to it.
I can raise levels in the labyrinth, and getting new jobs could turn out to be useful in any case.

Labyrinths aren't especially dangerous.
After thinking about it, according to experience, it's worthy of consideration.
However, going down as soon as possible. No, I mean going up. If one thinks about it, at present it isn't so dangerous.
It's ok if I carefully raise my level while going up the floors.

If one is so inclined, it's ok to stay in the lower floors.
In a single day, the income is a few thousand Nars. It won't be difficult to make a living.

"That's for the future, enough about that. Now, about a place to live, other than living in a hotel, could it be cheaper to rent a room somewhere?"

While murmuring my thoughts, I asked Roxanne.

"That is so. I don't know in detail, but if it is renting a room, a 1 year contract is 10,000 to 30,000 Nars. I think you can get a single house for 50,000 Nars."
"I see."

I don't know if that is cheap or expensive, but it's cheaper than living at the inn.
The hotel charges are 250 Nars a day. Multiplied by 365 days, it's over 90,000 Nars.
If we increase the number of party members, that will jump up.
"I'll do the cleaning and other chores."
"Ah, that's right. I'll be troubling Roxanne"
"No, it's no problem."

Living in a hotel, the chores and cleaning are left for the employees to do.
Because Roxanne is a slave and a maid, she can be burdened with that.
Of course I'll do my part, but without vacuum cleaners, water service, or washing machines, in this world it's going to be a time consuming labor.

"Hey Roxanne, can you cook?"
"Yes, I think I can do some dishes."

A slave, a maid, and a cook.

"Now that you mention it, it seems a master is responsible for providing food and living space to a slave but, putting the inn aside, is it ok to rent a house?"
"Yes. Of course."
"Even sharing a bed?"

I try to embrace her while lowering my voice.

“Y…yes. In fact, I’d be grateful.”

That’s what she said.
Was I being a bit mean?
It would seem she was thinking I’d make her sleep on the floor. Well, that was how I should have answered.

While embracing her, I touch her soft and plentiful bouncy chest.
Those bulges under the clothes with no bra.

Oh no.
At this rate I’ll push her down onto the bed. I said I’d refrain from doing it for the time being.
Why did I say that thing.

“How many days in a year?”
“Let’s see. 360 days and a few more.”

There’s no helping it, I keep questioning.
According to Roxanne’s explanation, with one year having four seasons; spring, summer, autumn and winter have 90 days each. Looks like there are one or two days off between each season.
If it’s one day or two days, it appears to be a leap year.
Thereupon, one year with 363, 364 days plus a few days, it’s almost the same as Earth.

Did we just enter spring?
There’s no way to know an exact date.

If a year has 365 days, of course renting a place is better.

“If I’m renting a place, where should I rent it?”
“I think it should be okay to rent one in a somewhat big town.”
“I see.”

I guess villages and such would be wary of outsiders.

“However, in the case of Explorers, I heard a lot of them live in Quratar and the imperial capital.”
“Quratar? I think I’ve heard about it.”

“There’s a big labyrinth in Quratar. I’ve gone into it once. An Explorer companion had a shop there so it was convenient. In Master’s case, since you can use magic, I think any place is good to live.”

I think by magic she meant [Warp].
If considering using Warp to go to a labyrinth, certainly there’s no problem living anywhere.

“But remember one thing. I don’t want it to be found out that I can use magic. I think we should live in a place where it’s common for Explorers to live.”

Because it has a labyrinth, an Explorer living in Quratar isn’t going to be strange.
Should we pay it a visit?

I have 5 gold coins left. If it’s 50,000 Nars, I can afford it.
It doesn’t seem the [30% Discount] will activate.
If it’s a 2 year contract, it might work.

Until we save up 100,000 Nars, we should look around.
But, without knowing future circumstances, taking a 2 year contract is a big risk.
It isn’t a sure thing that the [30% Discount] would work with a 2 year one anyways.
Perhaps, we should sign a 1 year contract.

That. However, do taxes exist?

“Come to think of it, I haven’t heard anything about taxes. How do you pay them?”
“…Ah, well. T-Taxes…”

Roxanne replied with difficulty.

“Did I ask something bad?”
“I’m sorry. There’s no problem. After both my parents died, I became a burden to my aunt’s household. This year they weren’t able to pay their family’s taxes…”
“Is that so?”

It seems Roxanne was sold off because they weren't able to provide their taxes.
I thought it was only a thing in historical period dramas, but they do sell their daughters if they can't pay their annual tax.

I pat Roxanne's head.
Slowly, I pat her to reassure her.

"The tax is a poll tax. It's paid in the winter of every year to the feudal lord. Master is a free man so it is 100,000 Nars. Slaves are 10,000 Nars. I think probably someone already paid Master's portion for this year."
"I see."
I believe it hasn't been paid though.
I'm glad she explained it willingly.

The tax for us two is 110,000 Nars?
Right now it just entered the spring season. There's still time.
There shouldn't be any problems.

While patting Roxanne's head, I pull her closer.

"Umm. Well. I think I'm fortunate to be able to serve Master like this."

Roxanne leans on my shoulder.

Chapter 36 - Magic Crystal

Later on I asked Roxanne things about the Labyrinth.
The Labyrinth is believed to be a creature.
What!?

The Labyrinths aren't everywhere, they're just in various places.

"So it's like the larvae inside the Antlion?"
"Antlion?"
"Ah, don't worry about it."

The Labyrinth lures in humans instead of ants.
The human is digested and absorbed by the demon for it to live.
Then it multiplies.

The Labyrinth is an area that the Labyrinth creature produced with magic.
You won't find it even if you dig into the ground near the Labyrinths entrance.
Is that why the levels go up instead of down?

If you go to the top floor of the Labyrinth and defeat the boss, you will kill the Labyrinth.
Exterminating a Labyrinth near where people live is the Lord's responsibility.

"Also, if you defeat a Labyrinth in an area without people, you can become the Lord of that region."

Roxanne explains it with enthusiasm.

"Thank you, I understand."
"You're welcome."

It seems I need to be taught a lot.
I return my thoughts to getting back to the room.
I pull out a leaf from the item box.

“Roxanne, the rucksack is ready.”
“Is an antidote the only thing you can use a leaf for?’

I was curious.

“What? That’s right. That’s what I’ve heard. After you sell it to the guild they will distribute them to the pharmacists & herbalists to be turned into antidotes.”
“I thought so.”

I place the leaf in the palm of my hand, and raise it towards Roxanne.
I used [Herbal medicine generation].
Ten antidotes appeared and spilled out of my hand.

“What? This…. This is…. amazing.”

Roxanne looks at me with respect.
I like to show off.
Surprises one by one.

“This is a secret.”
“Yes… Master is amazing.”

It’s not that big of a deal if I reveal the secret.
This is possible for Roxanne as well if I change her job.
Roxanne looks captivated.

After the antidote is made I put 59 of them in Roxanne’s rucksack.
One piece is placed in the item box.
There is already 26 of them in there, but the space has increased by one.

“Are there a lot of demons that use poison?
“Yes, I have heard there is a considerable amount.”
“So antidote is a requirement?”
“Only if the demon manages to hit you.”

I’m extremely thankful for Roxanne.
They’ll probably be needed soon.

After making the antidote, we went to the explorers guild.
We bought the Magic Crystal that Roxanne had told me about.

“Lets make it two Magic Crystals.”
“Would you like the black Magic Crystal?”

Roxanne? You didn’t tell me about this.

“Um, I want to use it to collect magic.”
“Then it’s the black Magic Crystal. Please wait a moment.”

After selling the antidotes from her rucksack, Roxanne went over to the notice board.
She’s reading intently.
Being able to read would be convenient.

I bought two black magic crystals for 20 nars.
It seems the 30% discount still isn’t working with the explorers guild staff.
I exchanged 10 copper coins for each magic crystal.

Magic crystals are small stones, about the size of a chicken egg.
As the name black magic crystal indicates, the color is black.

I don’t think I’ve seen any in the Labyrinth.
With the small size I may have overlooked them.
[Judgement] works on them though.
The name of the crystal is black crystal, not black magic crystal.

“What is the higher level ointment of nourishment?”
“Nourishment medicine.”
“How much is it?”
“600 nars for one.”

The price suddenly got rather high.

“And the level after that?”
“Nourishment tablets.”
“How much is that?”
“It’s 6,000 nars each.”

It increased by ten times.
It's a price that I somewhat expected, and I bought two nourishment medicines and a tablet.
Let's hope we don't take any major injuries.

"It seems to be a black magic crystal."

I go over to Roxanne and show her the crystal.

"Magic crystals change color according to the amount of magic they contain. When you defeat ten demons it will become red. It will become purple after 100, blue after 1,000, green after 10,000, yellow after 100,000 and white with 1,000,000."

So the color changes?

"It's a black magic crystal because there is no magic in it?"
"Yes, and the price changes according to the color. As soon as the color changes you'll get the higher price. There aren't many who work on them until they become white though, most will sell them off when they are yellow or green."

So the price won't change for a purple crystal with 100 monsters worth of magic compared to a purple crystal with 900 monsters worth of magic.
So I have to defeat 100,000 demons to make it yellow, and a million to make it white.
If I defeat 100 per day then it will take around three years to make it yellow, and 30 years to make it white.
As Roxanne says, there won't be many chances to sell them in a lifetime.

"I understand, so shall we go to the Labyrinth?"

We left the guild.
Even though we spoke a lot in the inn, not much of the day has passed, it's still morning.
In the bright sunlight, I walk while often looking back over my shoulder.

I'm looking at Roxannes breasts.
She follows along behind me and they jiggle with ever step.
It's not easy to see though, since she is wearing the Leather Jacket.

They are shaking.
Even though I didn't notice it in the dim light of the Labyrinth.
It definitely isn't an illusion.

The shoulder strap from the ruck sack appears to be digging in at the side.
Like tied up large, sweet fruit.
Very distracting on the eyes.

When Roxanne notices my eyes, she smiles.
I've been discovered.
All the respect I had managed to build up from things like making antidotes has been ruined.

After being found out, I continue hurrying to the Labyrinth.
Even though I could watch the jiggle if I walked beside her, having a man and woman walk side by side on this world doesn't appear to happen.
My body also hides the shaking of Roxannes chest from other mens eyes.

"The first floor seems to be rather crowded."

As soon as we enter the Labyrinth, Roxanne checks out the surrounding area with her sense of smell.
She doesn't even need to look.

"It's crowded?"
"Yes, there's a search end declaration out stating that the exploration of the first floor has been completed."

I don't understand it well, but is it a notice from the explorer's guild?
So alot of people have heard about it?

"Should we move on?"
"Yes, I've been as far as the third floor. I can fight monsters on that floor."
"Lets try the second floor."

We head into the black wall, and come out on the second floor.

"The second floor doesn't seem very crowded, there's a demon to our right."
"Is that right. Do we just need to keep the magic crystal in our possession?"

I pull a magic crystal from the item box and pass it to Roxanne.

“Yes, it’s fine to keep it in the rucksack. Magic won’t be collected if it’s kept in the item box though.”

The rucksack is lowered and the black magic crystal is placed inside.
We prepared our equipment and went into the right cave.

“I’ll try to defeat the demon with magic. Don’t dash ahead without permission.”
“Okay.”
“What is the search end declaration?”

After giving Roxanne a warning, I questioned her.

“It’s a declaration that all searches of the first floor have been completed.”
“And the amount of people here increase when the search ends?”
“Until the search ends, there might be some rooms with large quantities of demons.”

Ah, there was a room like that.
There was a room with at least ten Needle Woods in it on the first floor and it was a difficult fight.

“That doesn’t happen after the search ends?”
“When the search ends, it means rooms like those have been searched.”
“When a demon appears in a place like this, after a little while it will start traveling around. But when a demon appears in one of those rooms it’s just stuck there, so after a while the amount of demons in the room start to build up.”

Roxanne explains it since I look doubtful.
Is that how the demon room happened?

“So now that the exploration is done, that won’t happen anymore?”
“Mostly, but if people don’t go there for many days the demons will still build up. That kind of room is an extremely dangerous trap.”

Even though that kind of room is appealing now that I know AoE attack magic it seems the chance of finding one will be less.

There's still a chance if I continue climbing the floors though.
Was my luck good or bad finding one before I could use magic?

"I see, and that's why the people have increased."
"There's a demon."

Roxanne interrupts me with a warning.
A demon appears in front of us.
Needle Wood Lv2.

I launched a fireball that was powered up by me placing 99 points into intellect.
The demon was not defeated in a single blow however.

The second one is fired and the demon is defeated.
The demons seem to get alot stronger as their level increases.

Roxanne takes the branch and puts it in the rucksack.
The color of the magic crystal is still black.

Next I am testing the magic crystal.
In the bonus skills there is a crystallization upgrade.
Even though I didn't know what it meant before, I now think it's about the crystallization of magic.

I open the character settings and tick crystallization upgrade.
The skill becomes 4x increase.
I remove the bonus points from intellect and put them in crystallization upgrade.
The skill goes to 8x, then 16x, then 32x, and stops at 64x increase in crystallization.

Next, I defeated another Needle Wood Lv2. It still took two shots of magic so the benefit from increased intellect can't be noticed here.

I check the Magic crystal.
It's become a redish color.
This is a red magic crystal?

Another one is defeated and I check it again.
The color is now purpleish.

“When you defeat 100 it becomes purple?”

If two were defeated with the 64x increase, it becomes 128 kills.
The skill seems to be working.

“Roxanne, look at this?”

The purple magic crystal is take from the rucksack without waiting for an answer.
It will be seen at some stage anyway.
I want to recover my lost respect.

“What? Ah? …What!?”
“Mm, this is a secret.”
“Um, yes…. Master is amazing.”

After briefly showing Roxanne, I place it back in the rucksack.
I’m a bit surprised to.
Secretly cheating seems bad, but Roxanne doesn’t seem to mind.

“Do you know how much magic crystals sell for?”
“Green is 10,000 nars, and yellow is 100,000 nars.”

So if you need to hunt 10,000 demons for it to become green, then it’s one nar per demon?
So 64x is 64 nars? The income efficiency is better than the dropped items.

So if I want to earn money I put points in crystallization, if I want to become stronger I put points in experience, and if I want to fight something tough I put points in Durandal.
Things are going well.

“That’s will do for that experiment, though there are more to do.”

I declared to Roxanne.

“What experiments will be done?”
“There will be various ones with Roxannes help.”

In the party setting I switch Roxannes job to Monk.
I also set it to one of my jobs.

Kaga Michio. 17 year old male. Explorer Lv27, Hero Lv24, Wizard Lv26, Merchant Lv22, Monk Lv1.
Equipment: Wand, Leather Shoes, Leather hat, Leather armor.

Roxanne. 16 year old female. Monk Lv1.
Equipment: Scimitar, Shield, Leather Hat, Leather Jacket, Sandals, Mittens.

There’s been numerous times I was injured, but now Roxanne and I both have the Monk job.
With this I can test how experience works.
Is my share of the experience divided between each of my jobs? If I compare Roxanne’s Monk level to my own I can get a better understanding.

I’m not using my skill to decrease required experience til next level, and I’ve put the increased experience skill to 20X.
If I level up first, then the increased experience skill only works for me.
If Roxanne and I level up at the same time then we get the same experience.
If Roxanne levels up first then my experience is divided between my jobs.

Lets see how we go.

“Do you feel any changes to your body?”
“No, not really.”

When I removed the Hero job I didn’t notice my body feeling heavier.
It doesn’t seem like something you can be aware of.

“I would have liked to do this on the first floor, but I guess we’ll have to do it here. There might be some danger so please do not fight anything until the experiment is over.”
“It will be dangerous?”
“Well, the experiment won’t be dangerous, but it may hinder your fighting ability a bit.”

I don't really understand the difference between Beast Warrior Lv6 and Monk Lv1 so it's best to be cautious.

"Did you do an experiment like this already? Was I not supposed to fight?"
"No, but I might get you to try fighting later."

What happens when I change Roxannes job isn't the aim of this experiment.
If I test that it's best to do it on the first floor.
I don't think she'll be defeated in a single blow just because she's Monk Lv1, but it's best not to even try it.

After that I hunted some demons.
The increase in level happened at the same time for both of us.
The increased experience skill must work for the whole party.

Perhaps it isn't divided between my jobs either.
There's always the possibility that it's divided six ways though, between my five jobs and Roxanne's single job.

Next is testing out the skill to decrease required experience.
Only my Monk job increased to Lv3 quickly.
Well, that's how it is.
We had to hunt 20 demons to get up to Lv2.
After decreasing required experience to 1/10th I was able to increase my level with three kills.

Since Roxanne's level did not go up, it seems that the skill does not work for her.

At the moment my bonus points when I'm not using Durandal are like this:
31 points in decreasing required experience to 1/10th.
31 points in increasing acquired experience to 10X.
31 points in increasing magic crystallization to 32X.
15 points to get to the fifth job.
7 points to get 3X MP recovery speed.
3 points in incantation omission.
3 points in party job settings.
1 point each for Warp, Judgement, Party Job Settings, and Character reset.

Chapter 37 – Quratar

“About the groups of three monsters appearing, do they start from the 3rd floor?”
“No. I heard it starts from the 4th floor.”
“Then on the 4th floor, groups of four don’t appear.”
“Seems groups of four start from the 8th floor.”

After confirming Roxanne’s battle style on the 2nd and 3rd floor, we transfer to the 4th floor.
I ask Roxanne after I cast three spells at a group of two Minos and one Kobold that came first.
I confirm that [Fire Storm] only works against monsters.

“If that’s the case, then from the 16th floor, there are groups of five?”
“You understand it very well. That’s right.”

I got admired in an unusual way.
It seems that if groups of two come out on the 2nd floor, three on the 4th floor, and four on the 8th floor, then it is groups of 5 on the 16th floor.

With Roxanne guiding, next it is a group of one Mino and a Kobold.
First, the Kobold is reduced to ashes by [Fire Ball].

“Roxanne, take care of the Mino.”

For confirmation, I send Roxanne forward.
Roxanne, on the 2nd and 3rd Floor, was able to handle the Needle Wood Lv2 and Lv3 without any problems.
How well can she fight against a Mino Lv4 that looks like a compacted cow?

Roxanne dashes with her scimitar.
A light attack from the front. The swung horn attack is easily avoided.
Again, after an additional attack, she nimbly dodges the Mino’s attack.

What kind of bullfighter are you?!
She seems to be flawless against a single opponent on the 4th floor.

While Roxanne is facing the monster, I prepare Durandal.
I move towards the open left side and strike the Mino's flank.
I defeat the Mino and recover my MP.

"Looks like there are no problems with the 4th floor."
"However, the numbers. Will it be alright with three monsters?"
"Let's see. Two enemies, there's no problem at all. If we are surrounded by three, possibly we might suffer some attacks."

I feel that such thoughts are returning.
I'd panic if I was surrounded by three Minos.

"Aren't the horns scary?"
"Once you observe them there's no problem."
"Y-you dodged them very well."
"When the horn is swung and goes SWOOSH, it'll be alright if I pull my body like BAM and avoid it like WOOSH."
"…Understood."

Roxanne is the type of person who can't teach.
Like one of those genius types.

"In the first place, even if it puts all its strength into the horns on its head and charges, once it starts moving, it'll be greatly visible and you'll know what its intentions are in an instant. It's like it's telling you to avoid it."

And that's Roxanne's story.
Just by hearing those words, I think I can do it too.

No, no. I can't be fooled.
The only one capable of such a feat is Roxanne.

Well, it's no use worrying about future things.
On the fourth floor, battles can be settled within three spell casts, so there's no problem.
If we go up, the vanguard must face three monsters in the time it takes magic to be cast.
Because Roxanne said that she can take up to two enemies without problems, I have to give it my best against one.

After hunting for a while in the 4th floor, we return to the wall in the Adventurer's Guild.
It's not good, shutting oneself in the labyrinth.
No matter what, you get a lot of mental strain in the labyrinth.
A suitable change of mood is needed.

When we finished hunting, the color of the magic crystal had turned blue.
Roxanne's magic crystal turned purple.

It seems you don't gather magic power if you don't deal the finishing blow to the monster.
It didn't turn purple while Roxanne was carrying it but after I borrowed it.

Couldn't that mean if I'm carrying several magic crystals, these several magic crystals will be equally collecting magic power?

According to Roxanne, of course such a sweet deal couldn't exist.
Although, maybe it's different when using the [Crystallization Acceleration] skill.
To test that, I tried putting the two magic crystals in the rucksack.

The black magic crystal I borrowed from Roxanne turned purple after defeating nine monsters.
I had defeated two monsters using Durandal while the [Crystallization Acceleration] skill wasn't active.
The magic power obtained was 9 monsters x 32 multiplier + 2 monsters.

Since to turn a magic crystal purple you need the magic power from at least 100 monsters, it's okay to think that when carrying two magic crystals, the magic power will clearly be divided in two.
As expected, it seemed too good to be true.
When I returned the purple magic crystal, Roxanne was surprised that without even killing 10 monsters it turned into a purple magic crystal that needed at least 100 monsters defeated.

Because I told Roxanne that Kobolds aren't good prey, we didn't fight many Kobolds.
Roxanne is really helpful.

The Adventurer's Guild feels like it was more crowded than usual.
Could it be because of the Search End Declaration?
People are lined up at the purchase counter.

The people that came to sell place 4-5 branches and a leaf on the tray.
Certainly, people have been giving it their all in the first floor since the search ended.
Though the numbers are low.

"Leaves aren't something we can buy."

Roxanne says in a low voice.
With leaves costing 80 nars, even if I buy them at double the cost and without [30% Discount], selling 10 antidote pills with [30% Sale Price Increase], each leaf leaves a 165 nars profit.
"The Guild has the advantage on transactions with leaves. I think it's better that we give up on it."

Roxanne, as before, replies in a low voice.
Indeed. If we trespass on the Guild's interests and are targeted, we don't know what kind of retaliation they'd resort to.
I'll stop pursuing this method to get income.

It was in a very low voice; nobody should have heard it.
Even so, today is very crowded.
From the Guild's wall too, various parties are turning up.

Again, somebody comes out.
This time, a group of two people.

"Quratar, one way trip, anyone need?"
The first guy that comes out announces that.
Uh-oh. Is that an Adventurer that came from Quratar?
This is convenient.

I cast [Party Formation] and remove Roxanne from the party.

"I'll go and be back in a bit."
"Yes."

Seems Roxanne soon understood the meaning of that.
Maybe she was simply obeying her master's orders, but her eyes looks like she understood.
I think she probably understood.
It would be good if she doesn't do something like running away while I'm not here.

Well, if she disappeared while I wasn't watching for a short time it would mean she already ran away.
It would mean we must be together around the clock.

I pay a silver coin and I'm taken to Quratar.
I confirm the sun's position and return soon after.

Roxanne is… there.
She really stayed.

"I'm back. Want to go visit Quratar?"
"Yes. I'll accompany you."

The party is formed, and after confirming the sun's position in Vale town, we warp to the Adventurer's Guild in Quratar.

The time in Vale is before 3 o'clock in the afternoon, so around a bit after 2 o'clock?
There's about 3 hours before dusk, so there's time to spare.
Quratar is in the middle of the day too, but I don't know the direction or longitude, so the time difference is unknown.

The Adventurer's Guild in Quratar is slightly larger than the one in Vale.
It still can't be compared to the Adventurer's Guild in the Imperial Capital.
There are only three purchase counters.
It's bigger than the Adventurer's Guild in Vale, but from what I'd heard, I thought it was much bigger than this.

"Umm. Is that it?"
"Because in Quratar, the labyrinth and Explorers are in the center of town, the Explorer's Guild is substantially bigger."

Roxanne explains to me.
That's probably because I unintentionally muttered that while leaving the Adventurer's Guild.

"Is that so? Have you come here before?"
"Yes. I came here to inspect the labyrinth once. There are many labyrinths I want to enter at least once."
"Well then, do you want to visit it again?"
"Certainly! It's over there."

Roxanne points without any hesitation.

"Do you know which way north is?"
"I'm sorry. I don't know."
"Still, you know which direction the labyrinth is in!"

Ah. The smell?

"In the town of Quratar, the labyrinth is located in the center. In the towns with a labyrinth at the center, the streets radiate and extend out from there."

Seems it wasn't the smell.
If one looks at it, towards one direction of the street the buildings gradually become sparser.
In the other direction, the buildings get more crowded.

I see. Is that way the center of town?
We start walking towards the center of town.

Even so, the townscape of Quratar is still smaller than the Capital's.
It's more prosperous than Vale town. It could be compared to that degree.

Nearing downtown, many stores do business with an open storefront on the 1st floor.
There are fish markets and bakeries, and over there is a hardware store.

After coming to this world, it's the first time I've seen stores, other than some street stalls.

Especially the nondescript ordinary stores.
It could be said that the stores don't have really complex shapes.

Beyond the hardware store where the street intersects, there is a roundabout and at the center, there is a thick hill.
It is the entrance to the labyrinth.
From the town center, many streets stretch out; there are shops lining both sides of every street.

"Is that the labyrinth?"
"That's right. The Knight's Order station is built across the street in front of the entrance. The big building on the opposite side of the entrance is the Explorer's Guild."

I can see a bit of the right side of the labyrinth's entrance, the black wall.
Opposite there, across two streets extending from the center, a 5-6 story building is standing.
A red-brown brickwork building boasting a majestic look.

Indeed, the Explorer's Guild is pretty substantial.
From the open doors on the first floor, many people are going in and out.
Also, at the Knight's Order station, many people are standing in line.

"Why are they queued there?"
"To enter Quratar's labyrinth one has to pay at the entrance. 100 nars per person each time."

They require an entrance fee?
It looks like it's a tourist attraction.

"If there's an entrance fee, it would be better to enter once we have more time. Do you know the best way to rent a house?"
"There are managers. We could ask in a shop somewhere about it."
"Hmmm."

Lets look in this hardware store or something.
I pull Roxanne's arm and enter the hardware store.

“But, Master.”
“Umm?”
“Wouldn’t it be okay if we entered with Master’s magic?”

She tells me in a whisper.
I see.
Since I can use [Warp] to enter directly into the labyrinth, after only entering once, we won’t need to pay the fee every time.

Echigoya, you too are evil!
I want to unwrap your sash, round and round.
We enter the hardware store.
Saucepans, scissors, hoes, shovels, and other unknown things made out of metal are on display.
There are padlocks too.
Weapons belong in a weapons store. Hoes and shovels seem to be considered farming tools.

“Welcome.”

The one who comes out is a middle-aged aunty.
37 years old, Merchant Lv44.
I feel her level is questionably high.

“We’re searching for a place to live in the area, do you know where I can fi-”
“You’ve found her. I’m the manager for the 6th district.”

Before I finish asking, she answers.
This is the manager? We’re lucky.

“6th district?”
“This town is divided by the streets that stretch out from the center. The area where the Explorer’s Guild is located is the 1st district. Followed counterclockwise by the 2nd, 3rd and this would be the 6th district.”
“I see.”

Each district has a prominent location facing the labyrinth.
Because this shop is the most prominent place in the 6th district, she’s probably very competent if she became a manager.

“Are you an Explorer?”
“That’s right.”
“What kind of property are you looking for?”

I’m stumped after hearing that.

“On the contrary, I’d like you to show us what kind of properties there are. We’re looking to rent one for around 40,000 nars a year, besides that we don’t have any other conditions.”
“You two will be living there?”
“Currently that’s the case, but later on…”
“Indeed. You’re an Explorer after all.”

Without saying everything, the aunty takes over.
She seems like a person that loves to talk.
An Explorer entering labyrinths would form a party of up to six members.
I guess there are many Explorers that live together with their party members.

The aunty looks towards Roxanne for a bit. Next, she looks at my face, grinning unpleasantly.
Seems like she realizes Roxanne is a slave.
And again, she stares at Roxanne like she’s using [Appraisal].

I don’t know how she realized Roxanne is a slave, but that face looks like someone that knows.
As one would expect from someone called a manager.
Or, like the slave trader told me, probably there are many people that make parties with slaves to enter the labyrinths.

“…Err.”
“You have a good girl here. Is it alright to be near the labyrinth?”

Being stared at, Roxanne wants to say something. The aunty leaves her alone and talks to me.

“I’m not being particularly picky.”

I guess the rent will be high being closer to the labyrinth.
Being close to the labyrinth, it is also close to downtown.

But in my case, I can just use [Warp] to go to the labyrinth.
Even if have something to do in the business district downtown, it would be enough to come out the wall in the Adventurer's Guild.
There's no reason to be living near the labyrinth.
Rather, I think that because being far from the labyrinth the rent would be cheaper, it would be better to live farther.

"If it isn't for an Adventurer, there's a house with the right value, what do you think?"
"It isn't good for an Adventurer?"
"The previous resident covered it all in shielding cement, it's difficult to use."

I don't understand the meaning.

"Because shielding cement was used, one can't travel with [Field Walk]. It would be hard for an Adventurer."

Roxanne, getting a glimpse of me looking like I need help, covers for me.
Roxanne is seriously helpful.
Furthermore, to hide the fact that I didn't know what shielding cement was, she nonchalantly covered it up.

I see.
An Adventurer would be living further away from the labyrinth.
It's fine to travel using [Field Walk]. There's no special reason to be living somewhere with an expensive rent.
But since it's covered in shielding cement, that house would be useless.

"Will you show it to us?"

There's no other way than to test if [Warp] works or not.

"Understood. I'll make the arrangements."

The Aunty goes back into the store again.
She reappears after a while and we depart via another street in the direction of the Adventurer's Guild.

It might be hasty to rent a house.
Because I need to learn more after coming to this world, or it'd be better to think more seriously about things from now on.
Concerning earthquakes, volcanoes, tropical cyclones, and other such natural disasters, I might need to investigate.
"How's the climate around here?"
"It's good! Summers are cool and it almost never snows in winter."
"How much does it rain?"

Roxanne is asking for information from the Aunty, but that amount is not enough.

However, at any rate, I don't have many choices.
At the moment, Quratar and the Imperial Capital are our two options.
There might be other places we can live without any problems, but it'd be more economical to rent right away than to spend many months researching and pondering.
If this turns out to be a very bad place, I won't feel regret if we find a better town somewhere else.

The manager aunty guides us as we continue down the street.
In the town of Quratar, tall buildings are only built in the downtown area; once we go farther away, it becomes the residential area.
Two-story buildings are side by side with some degree of separation.
It feels like the outskirts of some countryside.

Progressing further, it becomes more vacant lands and fields than houses. A man there, for some reason, greets the aunty.

40 years old, a Villager Lv53?

I've never seen such a high level villager.
I feel like he's fearlessly strong. Is he really strong or am I being deceived by my own level?

"That was my husband just now."

She informs us after she exchanges a few words with him and leaves.

“He looks like an extremely strong person!”
“There isn’t a rampart in this town, is it? Since this town was built around the Labyrinth, a rampart is meaningless. Monsters can appear anywhere in town, although they’re weak. People afraid of monsters don’t live in this town. My husband and I try to enter the labyrinth three days at a time.”

According to Roxanne, monsters not only appear inside the labyrinth, but also in its vicinity.
Like the Slow Rabbit in the forest behind the first village, or the Gummy Slime that appeared while traveling in the carriage.
Towns are surrounded by ramparts so that such monsters won’t attack.
Because there’s a labyrinth right in the center of Quratar, it’s probably useless to surround the town with a rampart.

If you think about it, it’s a terrifying town.
Living in such a town, this couple seems to have tempered themselves.
The result of that is a Villager Lv53.

I’m alright because I can pull out Durandal anyways, but is Roxanne gonna be ok?

“Aren’t there any problems if monsters appear in the town?”
“There aren’t any problems.”

It was a foolish question.

“My husband works as a blacksmith in that shed over there. I handle the goods my husband produces.”
“Blacksmith?”
“Yes.”
“Is he a Master Smith?”

If he’s a Master Smith, maybe he can tell me the job’s acquisition method.

“A Master Smith is a job only Dwarves can obtain.”
“Is it different?”
“Inside the shed with a small smelting furnace he cast commodities. This has no relation to race. It’s something anyone can do given the techniques. Master Smith is a job in which, by means of magic skills, weapons and armor are produced, and only dwarves can become one.”
“I see.”

Somehow I don’t understand, but it seems Master Smith and Blacksmith are different things.
If you think about it, he is only a Villager Lv53.
That means one size fits all equipment is manufactured with skills?
Unfortunately, it seems impossible to obtain the Master Smith job to do smithing.

“Well, it’s over there.”

Progressing a bit further, we enter a narrow alley and then the aunty points towards a white house.

Chapter 38 - House

The manager aunty shows Roxanne and me the house that's being recommended as our living place.
A two story white house covered in mortar.
It feels like an ordinary house one can notice around this area and even in Vale town.
And yet, is it the sad nature of Japanese people that makes this feels so wonderfully big?

There is one thing that's improved in this world compared to today's Japan.
Although out of town, there are forests and plots of land just the same.
That one thing is my precious dog ears.
"The wooden windows have been restored. In the current condition, you can move in as soon as you bring in furniture."

The aunty opens the lock.
Inside the house, a cold naked concrete room is spread out.

As expected, it is big.
From a typical Japanese sense, one could already call this a mansion.

"Ohhh."
"The previous resident made many modifications, so there's no problem if you do any kind of interior remodeling. One special modification performed is a flushing toilet."

The aunty steadily moves forward inside the room and then opens an inner room's door.
Over in that small room there is a toilet.

"Flushing toilet?"
"You put water in the vessel above and it'll wash it out the drain. The drain draws water from the nearby river. Here we're upstream so it's pretty clean."

The bathroom has a toilet seat directly connected to the drain opening.
If water is put into the upper tank, it seems the force is enough to wash it away.

Flushing is preposterous, but it's still better than directly leaving the human waste in the porcelain.
"I see."
"Even if it's put here, it's still inconvenient. It's a hobby of the previous resident. A second one was being put in the second floor, but it was stopped."
"There's a toilet on the 2nd floor too?"
"It was stopped, thus only the drainage is connected in the 2nd floor."

The room next to the bathroom has a sink and a counter; looking at it, it seems to be the kitchen.
Roxanne is questioning the aunty.

"Then, let's look at the 2nd floor for a bit."

Fortunately, the manager aunty gets a hold of Roxanne and goes up to the 2nd floor.
I must test [Warp].

Once they go upstairs, I still know where Roxanne is.
Is this one of the party effects?
As a precaution, I remove Roxanne from the party. Visualizing the adjacent room, I face the wall and cast [Warp].
For travel, a Party is a single unit, so I don't know what happens when Roxanne isn't around.

A black wall appears in front of my eyes.
I try going through.
I perfectly come out the next room.

It is a success.
It seems [Field Walk] won't work, but [Warp] still does.
[Warp] has really good utility as it can also transfer directly into the labyrinth.

However, the things I have to worry about increases by one.
It's better to avoid transferring just anywhere with [Warp].
It'd be disaster if one transfers to a place where [Field Walk] or [Dungeon Walk] aren't supposed to work.

I should only transfer to places where I've confirmed [Field Walk] or [Dungeon Walk] can get through.
I haven't transferred to many places besides the Adventurer's Guild's inner wall or the small rooms inside the labyrinth. It hasn't changed much even now.

The cave where the thieves were sleeping carefree just before I gathered the funds to purchase Roxanne, perhaps it possibly was covered with shielding cement.
Those driven-out thieves, without keeping watch late night and early morning, everyone was able to sleep without any care.
Because it was a place where [Field Walk] couldn't be used, were they relieved by the fact that nobody would come in?

After looking around the 2nd floor in a way that doesn't seem unnatural, they come down the 1st floor.

"What do you think? Besides the flaws in this house, the water well is far so you'll need to travel a distance to draw water. Nevertheless, there shouldn't be any problems."
I am approached by the aunty who came down.
Finally, she fleetingly looks in Roxanne's direction.
Even if the water well is far away, it shouldn't be a problem when you can send the slave to draw the water.

"For me, it's alright. I think it's a good property."

I don't know to what extent Roxanne is truthful.
She should know that we can produce water with magic, right?

"I guess so."

Because I can use [Warp] and [Water Wall], to me the flaws in this house aren't flaws at all.
I could say that this is a good property.
The problem is if it is fine by ending up choosing the first house?

But, researching various houses would take time.
It's cheaper than living at the inn, so meanwhile we'll settle for this. It'll be ok if we move to another place later if it turns out to be no good.
Because Roxanne said it's a good property, it seems it isn't a bad house.

“One year contract for this property is 45,000 nars. The contract, because you might not be able to move today, if it starts from tomorrow, it’ll last until next year’s 13th day of spring.”

In other words, today is the 13th day of spring?
Because there’s a market price, price-wise it isn’t bad.

The manager doesn’t seem to be a bad person.
The insight to grasp that Roxanne is a slave. She also kindly made the contract start from tomorrow..
The manager herself is an elected person; if there are several managers from the 1st to 6th district, there could be competition.
I think a dishonest manager that scams customers wouldn’t be elected.

Once I look at Roxanne, she makes a big nod.

“Alright, let’s rent this house.”

After that, we walk and are taken to the Knight’s Order station. My intelligence card is checked.
Even if she’s a manager, her job is Merchant, so it looks like she can’t use the intelligence card skill.

“We’ll make the contract paperwork, but can you write?”

After returning to the hardware store, I am asked by the aunty.
As expected, seems there are a lot of people who can’t write.

“Is it fine if someone writes on my behalf?”
“Of course.”
“Then, Roxanne, please.”
“Certainly!”

While the aunty and Roxanne are preparing the documents, I look around the store.
There’s a Chinese Wok on display.
“What is this?”
“That’s a pan that professional chefs use. It is used when cooking with high heat.”
“Hmm.”

It isn't exactly a Chinese wok, but it resembles one.
It probably has a similar shape because it has the same use.
Feeling nostalgic, I gaze at the Chinese wok for a little while.

"We're the only place that sells them around here. Probably you won't see many."
"Then add this to the rent. What's the total?"
"I'm happy that you'd be interested in our specially made pan. That's why as a special service the total is 31850 nars, is it ok?"
Alright!
I had nothing to lose so I tried, but it seems the [30% Discount] works when the other party is a merchant.
Three gold coins in addition to silver and copper ones are taken out to pay.
The aunty hands over the keys to the house.

Since there's no furniture or bed, today we'll return to the Vale pavilion.
From the Adventurer's Guild in Quratar, we jump to the now rented house.
The contract starts tomorrow, but it probably isn't a problem.

"Wasn't it said that this house used shielding cement?"

After I leave the Chinese wok in a suitable place nearby, Roxanne says that.
What are you saying?

"Yes. I tested if it could be used properly. Even if [Field Walk] can't be used, my [Warp] is ok."

If I couldn't use [Warp] we wouldn't have made the contract.

"Eh? …That's so wonderful."
"I wonder."

If it's present Japan, one could commit as many times as one wanted the perfect crime of a sealed room murder case.
Whether this world's banks have things like safe deposit boxes or not, it might be desirable to investigate.
Although I wouldn't do it.
How should I put it, if I couldn't use [Warp] because of the shielding cement, did Roxanne plan on walking from here to the labyrinth or the Adventurer's Guild every time?
Well that could very well be.

Or, would it work from the wall beside the entryway?
It is outside the house. That would be a bother, but…
Am I being too lazy?

Once you try travel magic, traveling by foot is troublesome.
One big reason a house was rented is because I had to walk from Vale pavilion to the Adventurer's Guild each time.
With my own house, I can [Warp] without fearing what anyone could think.
It's extremely comfortable.

We warp from our house to the Adventurer's Guild in Vale.
It's evening in the town of Vale.
It feels like Quratar is located a bit further west.

After paying the fee for a single night, we enter the room.
Once I sit down on the bed, soon after Roxanne sits beside me.
Is it because I had ordered her to do that?
I'm happy that Roxanne sat beside me, but somehow I feel guilty.

Moreover, pushing her down is out of the question.
I feel like redoing everything from the start.

There's no helping it, I'll have to endure it for a while.
We do equipment maintenance and after finishing our meal, we go up to the room again.

"Well then, we'll wash your body. Get undressed."
"That's no good. Washing master comes first."

However, enduring until now, I was met with rejection!
Time is too precious to waste arguing. I take off all my clothes and get washed.

Afterwards I wash her enough.
Wash her I do.
I wash her to my heart's content till exhaustion.

From behind, I position my hands to the front. I wipe clean those sublime and beautiful sacred mountains.
Diligently. Carefully. Delicately.
So that I don't leave a single micron uncleansed.

So that I don't leave a single picogram of dirt.

Many times. Many times over. Again and again.
To one's heart's content. Until one's heart grows tired.
I'm satisfied.

Well, immediately after, I'd get even more satisfied…

The next morning, while it is still dark, we enter the labyrinth in Vale. After breakfast, we start the move.
With the Inn's room and the house connected by [Warp], the case containing the maid uniform and Roxanne's rucksack packed with things are moved into the house.
With half the body through, it is a strategy to transfer only the luggage with a single [Warp].
Seems the case and luggage are handled ok, a success without incident.

Vacating the Vale pavilion, we change residences.
In Quratar, arrangements are made to buy the minimum furniture such as a bed, table, chairs, cupboard, closet, cookware, cleaning implements, daily necessities, and other essential goods.
The furniture store people seem to bring them to the house in a cart.
All the furniture is second hand goods, but the bed's mattress seems to have been replaced with a brand new one, so there's no problem with that.

We make many trips with [Warp] between the Adventurer's Guild in the town center and the new house.
That alone is a single day's work.

Incidentally, carpets are high-class items, so in Quratar they aren't being sold.
Are they obtained from peddlers? Seems like I must go to the Imperial Capital.

"Well then, I'll be going to draw water."

I am told by Roxanne after she returns from buying water jugs.
As expected, doesn't she understand?

"There's no problem producing water with magic."
"Is that alright? But I heard it's considerably difficult to use magic."

“It’ll be alright if Roxanne helps me.”
“Err. What should I do?”

Taking out Durandal, we jump into the labyrinth.
Without even opening the entranceway, one can go to the work place. It’s really convenient.

“Well, search for demons.”

From repeatedly using [Warp] since the morning, I feel a little depressed.
I guess I used too much MP.

“Yes. Then, can I borrow my equipment?”
“We’re only hunting one or two, so…”
“That’s no good. We don’t know what can happen in the labyrinth. One must diligently get prepared.”

By Roxanne’s urging, I wear the leather cap and leather gloves.
So bothersome.

With Durandal, I slaughter the two Minos that Roxanne finds. MP is restored.
Roxanne is seriously convenient.

After returning, in the second floor room with drainage, four water jugs are lined up. Above them I create a [Water Wall].
Using magic once, enough water is collected that the jugs are not completely full, but more than half full.
The efficiency is not too good, but there’s no helping it.

Just past noon the furniture is delivered, it becomes a little bit more like a real home.
It now looks like somewhere someone could live in.

One room in the second floor is chosen as the bedroom and we both carry the bed.
The closet is placed in another room, because it’s awfully tasteless.
Right in the middle of the spacious room without any wallpaper, one bed is placed.

Roxanne prepares the sheets and quilt covers and spreads out a mat besides the bed, and it seems to have more or less become a bedroom.

“Of course, what should be done first, I think, is ascertaining the quality of the bed. How about it?”

I ask while lightly embracing Roxanne.

“Eh? Y-yes…unh.”

Receiving confirmation, our mouths cover each other.
Gently, my tongue is inserted and it is accepted. Seems there’s no misunderstanding.
I lay her on the bed; we test the quality.

Of course, testing out the bed is the best.
How was the customer’s experience? It’s impossible to know.
After that, we both make dinner.
Since there was no time, we didn’t go to Quratar’s labyrinth.
We only have some conversation.

Quratar’s labyrinth has existed since extremely ancient times. How big is it? Since nobody has defeated the boss in the top floor, it’s still unknown.
Generally, once a labyrinth grows to 50 floors, the entrance appears as if it is luring people.
Afterwards, while digesting the people, it slowly grows.
The record for highest floor reached for the labyrinth in Quratar is the 91st floor.
In addition to the legendary accomplishment of the first emperor’s party being recorded, at the present time for reaching the 80th floor, one would be marked down as top-class.

To some extent, there’s some pattern, but what kinds of demons appear on each floor differs for each labyrinth.
In Quratar’s labyrinth, it is Kobolds on the 1st floor, Naive Olive on the 2nd, and Spy Spider on the 3rd.
Because Kobolds, being weak, are suitable for beginners, Quratar’s labyrinth’s 1st floor is a popular destination for people new to labyrinths.

What’s more, I am taught while Roxanne is cooking.

Roxanne is making a vegetable stew in the stockpot; I'm frying meat in the Chinese wok.
Only the flavor isn't to the extent that you wouldn't eat it.

The vegetable stew might need to be boiled longer, but without a gas cooker, it isn't realistic to cook for a long time in this kitchen using firewood.
Someone needs to be constantly watching in front of the fire, in which case, one can't go to the labyrinth.

In other words, I need to put more effort into the fried meat dish.
Because it's our first day, it's inevitable to speak of what can't be helped.
It seems we should look for various seasonings and spices.

In this world, most likely it's a privilege of the wealthy class to employ a good chef that can cook delicious food all day long.
There are no artificial flavorings, solid dashi stock, or powdered soup base.

After dinner, the sun has set by the time I am boiling hot water.
In the middle of dim light, I wipe Roxanne's body.

"There's a candle but…"
"There's no candle stand."

Seems a set of candles, candle stand, and candle extinguisher are something necessary.
I didn't know.
Certainly, there's no way to stick the candles up like on a cake.
"It would have been good if we had bought them today."
"I'm sorry. Because candles aren't something cheap, I thought they weren't necessary."

Well, I'm able to enjoy Roxanne's bouncy chest without relying on my vision.
Their substantial mass is conferred to my palms.
Without rushing to conclusions, it feels like they'll spill over.
Softly and smoothly they bounce back against the hands I'm wiping with.
Actually, without relying on vision, I concentrate all sensitivity into my palms.
Maybe because there's no illumination she doesn't feel embarrassed; I am washed from the front too.

Testing the sensation of using the bed during the daytime is irrelevant.
There’s more room for nighttime dessert.
management reason.

Chapter 39 - Map

It is comfortable to wake up while embracing Roxanne and to savor the pleasant feeling of Roxanne dozing in my arms.

“M…”

And when I wake up, it’s the best to receive a kiss from Roxanne.

The soft and sweet kiss of Roxanne. To gradually wake up while being able to wriggle my tongue and after having sucked Roxanne’s mouth, I let go of her lips slowly.

“Good morning, Master.”
“Good morning, Roxanne.”

I open my eyes, but it’s pitch-black. Including the equipment, all of the clothes have been placed on the mats besides the bed. The wisdom of life. I get dressed in the dark, only relying on the sense of touch.

I cannot neglect to go to the labyrinth and it’s not like I have other things to do. No, I have things to do but I chose not to; that is why.

If it’s only 1 day I think a break is necessary some times. I can spend 24 hours in bed with Roxanne without anyone bothering me. I want a loose life filled with lasciviousness, but I can’t stop now.

At least let’s kiss again. I draw Roxanne close before warping. I snatch and suck Roxanne’s tongue.

Roxanne moans lightly, but she doesn’t refuse. When I bite Roxanne’s tongue lightly with my lips, Roxanne wriggles her tongue around in my mouth.

I talk with Roxanne while eating after coming back from Vail’s labyrinth.

“These boiled vegetables are quite good.”
“Thank you very much. The ham and eggs are very delicious, too.”

Breakfast was some bread I bought with some leaf vegetable that Roxanne boiled and some eggs and ham that I cooked. It is a very simple dish; the vegetables were boiled with salt and some vinegar while the eggs and ham were baked. Even though it is simple, it doesn't taste bad. Or is it that it can't taste bad since it is simple? Because it is difficult to control the boiling temperature and make a stew, we should cook this type of dishes.

"This bread is better after all.''

The 2 Nars bread from yesterday's dinner was dry and didn't taste good. That is not something a stingy person should say. Today's bread, which I bought on my way back from the labyrinth, is 8 Nars and Roxanne and I each eat half.

"But, is it all right for me to eat the same thing?''
"Since we have to enter the labyrinth, we have to invest in our body.''
"Thank you very much! I'll do my best.''

1 egg is 5 Nars, and we ate 1 egg each, the ham was sliced from a 100 Nars smoked ham and is roughly 15 Nars for each person so about 30 Nars for two people altogether. The leaf and the dessert of boiled greens when put together with the stew from yesterday's diner is a pile of several Nars.

I think it is a meal which is classified as a luxury in this world. Even the ham, because it is only good if it is baked, salt, and spices, are high class articles.

Although the quantity is quite good, I am getting used to 2 meals a day. Breakfast after the sun rises and dinner before the sun sets. Because I have some free time before breakfast, I feel really hungry.

I don't intend to compromise a meal. The difference in average height between a modern Japanese and a Japanese in the EDO period is about 20 centimeters. Since there is no difference in DNA, you can see the importance of nutrition. And I don't have to think about gaining weight since I enter the labyrinth, there are no sweets, and I eat 2 meals a day.

"Today I'd like to go to Quratar's labyrinth.''

I talk about my plan while eating.

“Of course.’’
“After, I’d like to do something about the tasteless room.’’

After all, there is just some furniture.

“I think we should display a carpet.’’
“Display a carpet?’’
“Yes.’’
“Not spread it on the floor?’’
“Yes.’’

According to Roxanne, to spread a carpet on the floor is something only rich people do. It seems like they use a carpet as a tapestry at an ordinary house. Difference in culture? Oh, because there isn’t wallpaper in this world, it would be a good decoration.

“We can get carpets at the imperial capital. Have you been to the imperial capital, Roxanne?’’
“Unfortunately, I haven’t. I would like to clean the house so how about you go in the meantime?’’
“Then I can go to the imperial capital in the morning and go to Quratar’s labyrinth in the afternoon.”
“Certainly.”

To be able to warp inside Quratar’s labyrinth, I must go inside once. I should warp near the entrance when I return from the imperial capital.

After breakfast, I warp to the adventure’s guild in the imperial capital. I wander around the Imperial capital, looking at what kind of stores there are and where they are. The Imperial capital is large and there are all kinds of shops here and there.

Because in Quratar, almost all the shops are for explorers, there aren’t that many kinds of products. It is centered on shops that buy equipment and drop items. Like I though, it seems like a lot of shops and products gather in the imperial capital.

I found the carpet shop, clothes shop, and the seasoning shop. I didn’t buy anything, just looked. When I buy something, I should come with Roxanne.

And, I don't know if it is coincidence or not, but I just saw 1 shop which seems to be expensive. In the clothes shops, there is a huge difference between the high quality clothes which are comparable to Ginza boutique of the imperial capital and the ones in Quratar. Obviously, it seems expensive.

The inside is spacious and even though it is the inside, there are steps and some steps rise; there is a mat spread at the entrance. The fabric is put at the back exclusive for Haute couture.

I don't know if it is because it is the imperial capital or the adventure's guild is around the corner, but there are only high-class shops. Well thanks to that, I found a shop that sells high-quality carpets.

Because I bought all kinds of things yesterday, there isn't much money left over. There are 2 coins of gold, but there are less than 100 silver coins.

On the way back from the capital, I go to the knight's office and pay a silver coin for the entrance fee.

"How about the labyrinth's conquest map too?"

The capture map of the Quratar's labyrinth was sold in the knight's office too. It is the business of many knights. On the stand, there are some brown poor papers lined up. The map seems to be some simple arrows written on the paper.

"Each level's capture map is 20 Nars a piece, 1 booklet that has all the levels is 1000 Nars, and if you want a nicely done book of parchment, it is 20,000 Nars."

For now, 20,000 Nars is too much and buying the booklet would be cheaper than buying 1 map at the time because level 91 shouldn't be captured yet; I don't know if the booklet has 91 or 90 pages.

However, it is a dirty and weak piece of paper either way you see it. It may crumble to pieces in a very little time. It may be just a waste even if I buy a booklet. Should I buy the booklet or buy 1 at the time?

"This booklet too."

I decide to get the booklet. When I start buying maps from level 1, it may be suspicious. It will be strange that I keep buying maps, but I don't go in the labyrinth. Let's just hope that if we keep it properly it won't be ruined immediately.

"Let's see… that would be 11 silver coins in total."

Says the knight while looking worried. The [30% Discount] doesn't seem to work though if I do to the knight what I do to the vendors, it'll be serious.

Added to the admission fee, I pay the 11 silver coins and go to the entrance of the labyrinth. There was an explorer guide at the entrance too.

The explorer who guides you in the labyrinth of Quratar seems to be highly ranked since he is person who conveys the achievements of the first emperor. Although there isn't a party who can break through level 90, you can go to level 91. This is because it has been passed between explorer guides.

If you pay the explorer, he may take you to the level you want to go, but because it may be necessary in the future, I enter level 1. I enter the labyrinth, following the party before me. The inside is no different from the labyrinth close to the town of Vail; it is the familiar and tasteless cave.

The only difference is that there are a lot of people in Quratar's labyrinth. There are people everywhere. Can I hunt like this? Even as I keep advancing, there are people.

In a place where there are few people, I cast warp to return home. As long as people doesn't find out that I don't have to use the incantation, there isn't a problem since there is nothing strange if an explorer uses dungeon walk.

"I'm back, Roxanne."
"Welcome back, Master."

When I enter home, Roxanne greets me. She stops cleaning and bows.

If she wore her maid cloths with this, it would be perfect. Well since they were expensive clothes, she doesn't wear them while actually working.

“Did you learn to greet like that in the merchant office at Vail?”

Roxanne’s behavior is excellent. It wouldn’t be possible without being taught by someone. Since the time she spends with the slave merchant may not be a pleasant memory, I don’t want her to recall too much.

But this time I dare to ask because it may be necessary information when I buy the next slave.

“Yes, that is right. Is it strange?”
“No. It is wonderful.”

Like I thought, she learned it from the slave trader. I get near her and pat her dog ears.

“Yes. Thank you very much.”
“I went to Quratar’s labyrinth and it is full of people”

I change the topic immediately.

“Since you can easily get a capture map and there are a lot of people, there is no danger of you finding a room where a lot of demons spawn and because there are a lot of people killing demons, there are many magic crystals and treasure chests. Even if you have to pay, there are more benefits.”
“I understand that since a lot of demons are killed, there are many magic crystals. But why treasure chests?”

The magic crystals are the collection of magic power that comes from demons when killed and if there is a lot of people, then more demons are killed and more magic crystals are made.

“I was told that the contents of a treasure chest are the equipment of a person who got defeated by a demon.”

Mmmm. This is an awkward conversation. That was brutally frank.

If there are many people, then there are many who are killed. Therefore there are a lot of treasure chests and because of that, more people gather for the treasure chests.

“But there are too many people, how do we hunt?”
“Because Quratar’s labyrinth is considerably large, the deeper you go, the less people there are. Besides, the first floor has a lot of beginners because more people are safer.”
“Is that so?”
“If we go higher, we would see less people. Or you can hunt in the middle of the night when there are less people.”

I could hunt in daytime if I go to the other side of the planet. Doesn’t anyone come from such a place? Maybe the distance you can travel with field walk is limited.

“Then we will go to Quratar’s labyrinth tomorrow morning. Do you want to go to Vail’s labyrinth today?”
“As you wish.”

After that, I go to Vail’s labyrinth to replenish the water she used for cleaning. After returning, I use water magic, but it’s not enough. The water is used for almost everything, for dinner, for the toilet, and for bathing before sleeping.

“Sorry. Please help me a little.”

Because I teleported to the fourth floor of Vail’s labyrinth, I used a considerable amount of MP. When advancing according to Roxanne guidance, we find a group of 1 green caterpillar and 2 minos. Because it is troublesome if the green caterpillar fires its thread, I kill it first.

As for the minos, Roxanne keeps them occupied. While I think that, 1 of them aims for me with its horn.

I try to avoid in a hurry, but I couldn’t. My left hand’s forefinger, which was holding Durandal, is caught between the horn and Durandal.

IT HUUURRTS!!!

It is so painful that tears come out unconsciously. A vital spot was hit. It makes a JinJin sound.

As retaliation, I put all of my mind to kill the 2 minos. It took eight hits. I get it; it is bad to get careless.

Because I was going to hunt only a little, I didn't wear the leather gloves. I had handed the leather mittens to Roxanne and I was too lazy to wear 1 myself.

I still have the magic crystal in my item box although this can't be helped since I used the points from [Crystal Acceleration] and [Increased experience rate] to use Durandal. Because I still don't understand well enough the [Required experience] value yet, I decided not to play with it.

For example, if we need to kill 20 demons to rise 1 level. When the necessary experience value is at 1/10, then I need 2 demons to rise 1 level. Then what will happen when I kill a demon without putting points in necessary experience value and after that, I kill a demon with the necessary experience value at 1/10? Or the other way too. If I kill a demon with the necessary experience value at 1/10 and after that, I kill a demon without the necessary experience value, will my level rise?

I understand it to some extent, but it is hard to know for certain. I don't know how the experience value of the demons on the second floor differs from the demons on the first.

I can't remove Durandal while experimenting so I need to use weapon rank six. This means that I don't have enough spare bonus points for increased experience and decreased required experience. This means I may end up hunting dozens or hundreds of demons to do an experiment.

But is there any reason to experiment with it?
Is there any meaning in experimenting with it? If I kill 20 demons and my level increases, and then kill another demon with required experience set to 10%, my level probably won't go up. Isn't that enough information for now?

It's probably a waste to fight without decreasing my required experience by as much as possible.

We go back to the house from the labyrinth. I still have on my mind the pain of my finger. Probably because of my lack of experience, I underestimated the labyrinth and there was an opening. It would be a good lesson that the labyrinth is a fearful place.

It looks like my finger would be all right for the time being. Because of the pain, it may have caused internal bleeding, but it would be cured with the HP absorption of Durandal.

“Something wrong?”

Roxanne asks me as I look at my finger.

“It just grazed me a little.”
“Are you ok?”

She seems relatively worried. Although the one who was wrong is me since I didn’t listen to Roxanne’s advice of wearing leather gloves.

“It is not all right. Could you lick it a little?”

I hold out my forefinger before Roxanne’s eyes.

“E…Oh. Ano…”

Roxanne seems to be puzzled, but she doesn’t particularly refuse. She seems to be fine with it. Thinking that, I bring my finger close to her mouth.

Roxanne opens her lips. Her light pale pink lips expand the gap slowly. The crimson content is exposed. A sexy bright red tongue.

Roxanne brings her face close to my finger and closes her lips. My forefinger is fully wrapped in a fluffy feeling. It is moistened, warm and soft. A fleshy tongue wraps my finger and twines gently.

Roxanne closes her eyes and sucks on my finger. Roxanne’s chestnut eyelashes are long and there is too many to count, probably because she is from a wolf tribe. Although it isn’t to the extent to say that I’m bewitched, it is splendid. This is the aim of an adult woman who uses make-up lightly.

I do not move my finger and leave it to Roxanne. Roxanne’s tongue goes back and forth around my finger several times. It is rubbed and gently twines. And my finger is healed in her mouth which is calm and full of affection.

Once again, she opens her light pale pink lips and I can see the inside of her crimson mouth. And with a white thread between my finger and her palates, she is moving her tongue and tasting my finger. Roxanne's face moves away slowly.

I barely endure the feeling of wanting to chase her mouth. I really want to chase it. Roxanne, I really want to kiss you.

"U-Umu. The pain went away. Thank you."

Roxanne turns her face away embarrassed.

"Is this some kind of skill?"
"No. It is different."
"Even though it is amazing, almost like healing magic."
"I don't think there is such a thing."
"No, it is amazing. If there is anything from now on, I'll be counting with you."
"…A-Ano… Yes"

I praise her until she finally accepts to do it again. You did a wonderful thing. Although I had a painful experience because of my carelessness, with this I'm even or rather I end up better. The advantage of an injured person.

Chapter 40 - Quratar's Labyrinth

The next morning we went to Quratar's Labyrinth.
I prepared my equipment in the dark, and warped to the first floor's entrance room.
Even though I expected it to be less crowded at this time, I still saw someone straight away. Dungeon walk can be used in the entrance room so there wasn't a problem.

"Let's see. Straight ahead I think."

I showed Roxanne the capture map to double check.
The map isn't a complete map of the whole floor, it's just a breif map showing the path that leads to the second floor.
There isn't any other information on it, and the quality of the paper is rather bad.

"This is pretty bad quality."
"Well, that's how papyrus is."
"Papyrus?"
"Yes."

Oh! So this is papyrus? I learnt about it in history class.
Flimsy paper with a brownish color. Well, it's not really even paper.
It seems like it will tear really easily.
This is the first time I've seen it.

There's only writing on one side, would it tear if the back is written on?
Or is it single sided because the 90 maps are normally sold separately?

Last night I removed the first three maps from the booklet and put them in my rucksack.
The booklet has 90 pages with the capture maps up til the 90th floor.
The pages have the floor numbers written on them.
The numbers for 1 to 3 I remember from the Vale restaurant.

"There seem to be quite a lot of people."
"Especially on the first floor, there are parties entering all the time."
"Hmmm."
"There's a lot of people doing long hours to make money."

Despite the fact that it's early there is still a considerable amount of people.
It's comparable to the amount of people in here during the day yesterday.
The party ahead of us seems to be looking at a map as well, and is moving along about thirty meters ahead of us.
It seems I didn't need a map.

We continue on the path indicated by the map and arrive at the boss room.
We had to walk about three times as much as I did in Vale's Labyrinth.
It seems that Quratar's Labyrinth is quite large.
Even though we saw numerous people we did not encounter any demons.

There were several parties in the waiting room outside the boss room.
We wait for a while and then our turn comes up.
The first floor boss is the Kobold Kampfer. Roxanne fights in the front, so it's quite easy.
While Roxanne exchanges attacks with the enemy, I attack it from behind to weaken it with Durandal.

The second floor is quite different, there's no people at all.
We ran into demons numerous times.
Since there isn't anyone to see it I can freely use Durandal and magic.
The floor boss is attacked in a pincer formation with Roxanne at the front and myself at the back again.
My job is simply to attack if from behind to weaken it with Durandal.

"Isn't there more people on the third floor than there was on the second?"
"Yes, because the second floor is still half Kobolds."
"Ah, that makes sense."

When you're strong enough to work your way up, the Kobold isn't worth fighting anymore.
Thus there wasn't anyone on the second floor.

"The Kobold is a weak demon for beginner's so they gather on the first floor of Quratar's Labyrinth to hunt them. The second floor isn't popular for beginners, and not popular for anyone else since it's still half Kobolds. As the Kobolds decrease more on the third floor, the amount of people increases."

We saw numerous people on the third floor, though not as many as the first floor.

Unless there's no choice we do our best so that nobody see's me using Durandal.
Against the floor boss, Roxanne still handles the front while I swing at it from behind with Durandal.

The third floor boss, the Spice Spider, leaves pepper behind.

"Oh, Pepper! I've heard that pepper is worth it's weight in gold."
"It can't possibly be that valuable."

It seems I had a strange belief.
I think it's used in a lot of meat dishes.
Well, it isn't a special item since you can get it any time from beating the Spice Spider.
It was a short lived joy.

We continued on to the fourth floor.

"How crowded is it?"
"A bit less than the third floor. If we head deeper in we should be able to fight without being seen."
"Ok, lets do that."

I didn't bring the capture map for this floor, so we won't be clearing it for now.
Even though there's capture maps for Quratar's Labyrinth and we can work our way up quickly, it isn't a good idea.
At some point we'll hit our limit.
Somewhere there's a floor we won't be able to get past and a boss we can't defeat at our current levels.

I don't know where.
It could be an upper floor, or could be the fifth floor boss.
I'm sure things will become dangerous if we advance too quickly.

Roxanne continues on until there are no more people around, we find a small safety room and thus this morning's searching is over.
We return to the house and make breakfast.

Today we are having baked shema.
Shema is something like flavoring vegetables with a herb.
We roll meat up in this and bake it.

I smack the meat with a pocket knife as a substitute for a meat cleaver.
We season the meat with Kobald Salt, and Pepper which has been crushed in a mill and then rolled with the shema.
Some olive oil was added to the pot, and the food was baked.

The olive oil is dropped by the plant demon Naive Olive from Quratar Labyrinths second floor.
The Kobald Salt comes from the Kobald, and the Pepper comes from the third floor boss's dropped item.

The taste was rather average.
The shema is a bit spicy, and similar to the leaves of a red pepper.
It's fine for a first try.

After breakfast we head to the clothes shop in Quratar.
Roxanne's clothing is high quality, but it won't last forever.
Our spare clothing is just my Jersey, and Roxanne's Maid clothes.
The high quality boutique in the Imperial Capital isn't necessary for our clothes.

"Should we get two sets of top and bottom clothes?"
"Is it alright? This shop sells brand new clothes."

Roxanne asks at the entrance to the shop.
My overcoat is second hand, but second hand goods didn't hold much interest in modern Japan.
It seems to be the opposite here with emphasis on value.

"It's fine."
"I think it's common for a slave to wear second hand clothing."

So the flow goes from nobles to commoners to slaves?
Nobles buy the brand new items, it's sold and then commoners buy it and sell it a few times, and then slaves get it. Maybe that's it.

"It doesn't matter. You can choose something you like."

I give her a nudge, and push her into the store.

Even if I say top and bottom clothes, there isn't much variety.
A tunic for the top, and trousers for the bottom.
By the way, the tunic is put on over the head, unlike a shirt which opens up at the front.
Village women have long skirts, but all women who enter the labyrinth wear trousers.

Roxanne looks through the few types of clothes choosing carefully.
Roxanne is looking for my clothes as well.
Occasionally she holds something up to my body with a "this one?" or a "how about this?".

When the clothes are finally bought and we leave the shop, it seems most of the day has passed us by.
Our rented house is to the east when coming from the center of town.
Even though we thought it might take half a day, it ended up taking longer.

"Thank you, Master."
"You even found clothes for me, thank you."

It's worth it just to see this smile from Roxanne.
All up the clothes ended up costing 1,050 nars. It doesn't seem especially high.

"I'd like a larger tub to wash the clothes in, is that alright?"

One the way back, Roxanne points towards the general store with wooden goods displayed.
When one thing increases it's necessary for something else to increase as well.

"That's fine."

Upon entering the store there are tubs and basins displayed to one side.
Roxanne picks out a large tub and passes it to me.

"Welcome!"
"This tub, is it the largest you have?"

When a worker comes over, I ask him while showing the tub that is a bit under a meter in diameter.
This general store has a wood craftsman in the back processing the wood.
If it's here, "that" may be available.

"Something can be custom made."
"That's fine?"
"We even cater to nobles. If there's a large amount of cloth to wash we can make something."
"I'd like to request something."

What do I want? A bathtub.
Since we managed to rent a house after many trials, next I'd somehow like to get a bathroom.

There doesn't seem to be a custom of people taking baths, unless they are rich.
Water is fetched, and a heating fire is made, and it's quite costly.
I don't know if there are any hot springs, but I don't think so in this climate.

Even in Japan I mainly used a shower.
Only sometimes would I get the desire to use a bath.

It's different now, my circumstances have changed.
If I get in the bath now, Roxanne would follow.
Roxanne would be together with me in the bath.

Since Roxanne will join me, I really want a bath.
I'd really like to bathe with Roxanne.

Roxanne would wash me, and then we'd soak in the bath.
Mmmmmm.
There is no choice, I need a bath built.

By any means, it is necessary to build a bath.
It is absolutely necessary to make it.
Did I remember to say it's necessary?
Ok, it's time to do this.

But, how do I make one?
That's the problem.

No bathtubs were seen in the furniture dealer or other shops of Quratar.
The old lady said I could change the interior of the house without needing to get permission, but I also need to find someone to do the work.

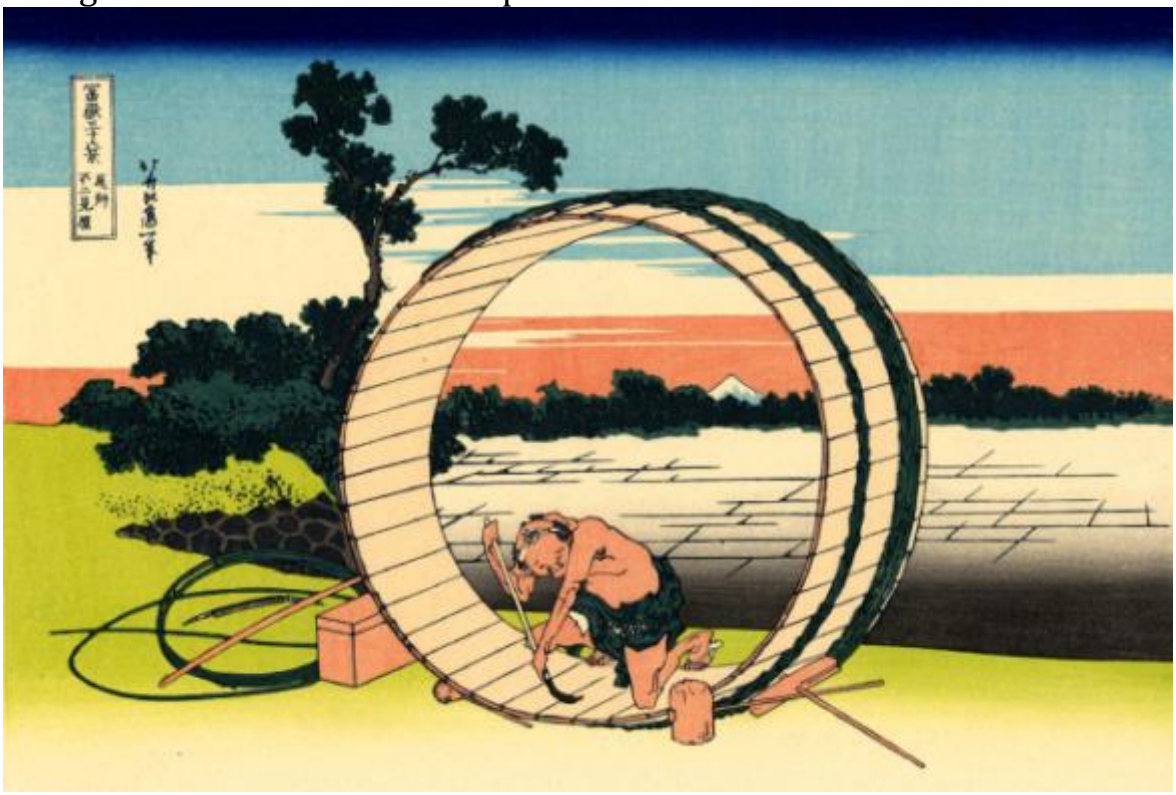
Even though I can make water and fire with magic, I can't reveal that.
Water comes from the well or the river, and it can be boiled on a fire with brushwood but that's normally quite expensive.
Will they think I'm a bath lover or something?

I can ask around, and a boiler isn't necessary.
I've already verified that I can heat water with fireball.
I don't need them to make something unnecessary, but how do I decline it?

Can an DIY amateur make a bathtub?
I considered it, but I'm sure I'll need a craftsman.
You never know what you can do until you try though.

"You can see our merchandise, I think we can make something without problem."
"I see."
"How big were you thinking?"
"If possible I'd like something with a bit more diameter than the height of a person."

I imagine Katsushika Hokusai's picture.



"We can do that, is the regular depth fine?"
"Yes, it's fine like this."

I point at the tub with the deepest size.
I didn't refer to the purpose because asking for something strange would have been suspicious.
The depth is around 50cm.
The bottom is thick, so maybe it's a little shallower?

The purpose is not just to take a bath, but to get in with Roxanne.
It should be a reasonable size.
It has to be wide, but shallow isn't bad.
I've heard that a deep bath isn't good for your heart.

"Hmm… Well, how about 2,000 nars?"

After the workman thinks about it for a while, he presents a price.
It's a lot cheaper than I thought.
Well, the other tubs are 20 nars and 100 nars so I guess that's rather high in comparison.

“That’s fine.”
“Since it’s built to order it will take around five or more days. I’ll send a messenger to let you know when it’s done and we can organize to deliver it on a convenient day.”

The price seems to include delivery.
By the way, this world does seem to have addresses.
Quratar has six sections and seven districts, and the address of the house I’m renting is 123.

That’s fine, I’ll also get this.”
“Thank you, that’s 50 nars.”

I show the wash tub that Roxanne picked out.
Since the worker has the job of villager my 30% discount doesn’t apply.

“A large tub, what will you use it for?”
“You can look forward to finding out.”

Since Roxanne is holding the clothes, I carry the tub back to the house.
After returning to the house we change into the clothes we just bought.

“I’ll wash the clothes.”
“Yes. Since we took a lot of time in town today we’ll have a break from the Labyrinth for today.”
“Ok, then I’ll do the cleaning with my spare time.”

It’s fine since we were in the Labyrinth before sunrise.
Since I made water for washing, cleaning, cooking and bathing, I ended up having to go to the Labyrinth twice for MP recovery.
I’m a little worried about filling the bathtub now.

“I’ll prepare dinner now, we are having white stew.”
“What is white stew?”
“You haven’t had it?”
“No.”
“Well you can look forward to it then.”

I should be able to make white stew with the ingredients from this world.
First, you cook round slices of meat in a pan with some wine and water.
You let it stew for 30 minutes.

In this world you get wine and milk by taking a bottle to the shop.
This world doesn't have any carton's or PET bottles.

Next, the vegetables that Roxanne used for the vegetable stew were added and cooked with a low flame for a bit.
The spring onion is good to remove any bad smells from the meat, but spring onions are poisonous to dogs.
I checked with Roxanne to make sure there were no vegetables she wasn't able to eat.
It's the same vegetables that Roxanne was using on her own, so there shouldn't be any problems.

The white roux is made while cooking.
Butter is put in the wok and some flour is fried.
Then milk goes in and everything cooks on low heat until it thickens up.

I did the white roux rather well.
I can probably make cream croquette's and clam chowder with this.
The gratin would be hard since it burns with the oven.

I put the white roux with some leaf vegetables to give it a green color.
Finally I add some salt and pepper for taste.
Success!
Roxanne quite liked the taste as well.

"Master, it's very delicious."

I want to say don't talk while you have white stuff in your mouth.

Chapter 41 - Treasure Chest

While I was waiting for the tub to be completed, I continued searching through the Labyrinth and finally found the fourth floor boss room.
It's helpful to have Roxanne while searching, but it's still not easy.
Even if we know the direction of a demon we sometimes have to backtrack the way we came.
Demons can be hidden by doors which hides their smell too, this also makes us walk back and forth a bit.

Should I prioritize exploring or hunting?
Vale's Labyrinth is different to Quratar's where the only time you won't see other people is the early morning.
Quratar's Labyrinth has a map so it isn't necessary to explore it, however there is the chance to find magic crystals and treasure chests so exploring to some degree is necessary.

After finding the fourth boss in Vales Labyrinth, I feel I've started to become familiar with how each floor is layed out.
The boss of the fourth floor is a demonic cow similar to the Mino.
Roxanne will attack from the front, and I'll attack with Durandal from the back.
As I think about it, I find myself worried that there might be a back kick that we don't know about.

I attack it indiscriminately.
A slash to the right flank, and then a slash to the left flank, I attack it over and over.

We destroyed a frightening enemy, and then moved on the the fifth floor.
The first thing Roxanne found is a Mino Lv5.
I attack it with Durandal once, but it isn't defeated.

Durandal killed everything in a single blow on the fourth floor.
The only job I have equipped to improve my strength is Hero, I mainly use jobs for extra intellect.
After a second swing, it's defeated.

I put Durandal away, and Roxanne finds a Cheep Sheep.
This demon appears on the fourth floor of Quratar's Labyrinth, but in Vale it

appears on the fifth floor.
Even if it looks like a sheep, it still looks quite ferocious.
It also has horns.

As I feared, even though I used three fireballs, it was not enough to defeat it.

It can't be helped I guess.
It moves sideways, and Roxanne moves to counter it. I shoot a fireball at it from an angle and it's defeated.
When we encounter three of them at once it will be quite dangerous.

With Roxanne's help we can try to avoid groups of three, but it's hard to tell the size of the groups from smell so we can't avoid them completely.
I'll be embarrassed if we have to run away, so I'm trying to think ahead.

If it's a group with Kobolds then it shouldn't be a problem, Kobolds are easy to pick off even if there are three.
The Kobold Lv5 can be defeated in two spells.

Like Roxanne said, she couldn't notice groups of multiple demons.
We came across a Mino and a Cheep Sheep.
She elegantly dodged them by a hair's breadth.

"Roxanne's movements are amazing. Should I try to copy them? Or is it too hard for me to copy?"
"I think Master can do it to some point."

I'm aware of my own skills.
Roxanne's opinion might not be right.

We came across a group of three. A Cheep Sheep, a Mino and a Green Caterpillar.

"Roxanne, get ready."

To start off I use three [Fire Storm].
As soon as I use the third one the Mino is on top of us.
The Cheep Sheep and Green Caterpillar are also near.

Roxanne parries the Mino's horn with the Scimitar.
Despite the parry she manages to get in a blow as well.
I block the horn of the Cheep Sheep with the wand.

"It's coming!"

Roxanne yells a warning.
Glancing sideways I can see an orange magic formation underneath the Green Caterpillar.
It's about to spit thread.

I don't worry about it.
I use a fourth [Fire Storm] without moving.
If the Green Caterpillar is defeated then the thread will not appear.

My [Fire Storm] starts at the same time as the Green Caterpillar shoots its thread and Roxanne jumps back to avoid it.
It sprays it all around our area and a little of it gets on me.

All three demons are defeated simultaneously.
They all become smoke, and the thread melts away as well.

"Urgh. The Green Caterpillar is troublesome because of this."

I let out a breath, and lower my wand.

"Yes. It finds a position where it can aim at two people."

Roxanne is about a meter behind me.
The thread doesn't seem to have worked on her.
Did she avoid it all?

"Even if he shoots thread, you can avoid it?"
"Well, the demon was defeated before it finished shooting it's thread. If it went on longer it would have been harder to avoid."

If I jump back a meter I can try to avoid it too.

“So on the fifth floor if I shoot off four spells it will be the same time as thread being shot.”
“Yes, and if Master can handle one then I think we can fight three easily.”

I was worried when we fought two demons earlier, but we even managed to defeat a group of three.
Looks like we’ll be able to keep fighting on the fifth floor.

Since we can fight on Vale’s fifth floor, we should try the fifth floor of Quratar’s Labyrinth as well.
The following morning we use the map of the fourth floor to go to the boss room.

Beep Sheep Lv4.

This seems to be the boss of Quratar’s fourth floor.
Baa Baa. It’s noisy like a normal sheep.
I’ve become used to seeing their ferocious looking faces.

The front with the horn is left to Roxanne.
I move to the side and attack it with Durandal.
An orange magic formation appears near it’s feet.
I attack the sheep with Durandal, and the spell is interrupted.

“What skill does the Beep Sheep have?”
“I don’t know.”

I ask Roxanne, but she doesn’t seem to know.
I don’t think it will be string like the Green Caterpillar.
Even though I can stop the string with Fire Wall, there isn’t a way to counter a skill I don’t know about.
Durandal has the incantation interruption skill at least.

Near where I attacked with Durandal, the sheep bends it’s front legs.
A kick from the rear leg comes at me.
I jumped back a lot to avoid the kick.

Being hit by that kick could put a hole right through me.
If I watch carefully I can manage to avoid it.

The same way that Roxanne avoided the string, I was now a meter back.
The Beep Sheep doesn't come after me.
The orange magic formation appears at it's feet again.

Dangerous.
I raise Durandal as I charge in panicking.
I'm an idiot.

The purpose of the Beep Sheep's attack was to buy time to use it's skill.
Since I jumped back so far I've given it an opportunity.
I've been caught off-guard.

Even though I swing Durandal, I'm not in time.
Using [Overwhelming] might not be enough either.
There's a "Baa Baa" from the sheep like a warning sound.

…
……
……

Gah. TN Babel Fish translated this sound effect ぐおっ as "To prevent your boobs."

Suddenly I was pushed away by the Beep Sheep.
I stagger two or three steps, but manage to hold on somehow.
What happened?

Roxanne seems to have been attacked.
She's holding her stomach.

Instantaneous movement?
Or a AoE attack?

"What happened…"

The Beep Sheep uses a head butt, but I manage to block it with Durandal.
It wouldn't be good to be hit by the horn.

The first attack seems to have hit the Leather armor.
It's pretty good.
Though there's the chance it might pierce through it.

"I don't understand, I suddenly was hit with an attack."

I dodged the sheep's attack, and used Durandal to make a chance.
In the moment between attacks from the Beep Sheep, I looked to Roxanne and used [Medical Treatment].
I can use Durandal to heal, but Roxanne doesn't have that option.
Since her level is low, I try to prioritize healing Roxanne.

"I was attacked suddenly as well."
"Master didn't move for a little while."
"I didn't move?"
"Right, like sleeping."

Ah.
Beep Sheep's skill might be a technique to put it's enemies to sleep or make them faint.
After the warning sound I lost consciousness.
When I was attacked I finally woke up.
That's why it feels like I was suddenly attacked.

"The enemy has a sleep skill."
"Yes, I think that's it."

When it uses that skill, it will be able to attack you.
I can't let it use that skill a lot.
I try to stick close to the demon to attack it at any time.

How much damage has Roxanne suffered? I don't know.
Even for my own damage I only have a rough sense of how much it is.
Should I use healing three times?

After fighting back and forth a bit, the sheep changes it's position.
It points it's horn towards me.
Does it think I am easier to deal with?

I block it's horn with my sword, and then land an attack.
It attacks with it's horn again and I frantically move my arms back to block the attack.

The Beep Sheep spins around, and prepares to launch a kick.
I lean back greatly and manage to avoid it, I don't want to end up in the same situation as before.

Roxanne is also attacking, but there won't be large amounts of damage from the Scimitar.
The sheep prepares again, and launches a kick at Roxanne.
She easily avoids it, and manages to slash at the leg while it's stretched out.

Her movements flow well when attacking the enemy.
The base of her body isn't moved, and she sways in a relaxed manner.
Since she dodges it closely, she won't be too far away to attack it.

This is in comparison to me, who jumped back a long way and gave the enemy a chance.
Even though I was cautious and rushed straight back in I still couldn't attack fast enough.

I deflect the horn, and finally manage to land a blow.
The Beep Sheep's head moves to the right, and then swings with strong momentum.

I could read it's attack, and lent back to avoid the swing.
Then I swung Durandal at it's neck because I saw an opening.
Durandal tears up it's soft neck.

Finally the demon is defeated.
It becomes smoke and disappears, leaving behind an item.

"It's finally defeated? Are you okay?"
"Yes, since you used healing several times I am alright. Thank you very much."
"Even if you think there's just a little damage remaining, say so. We have to give recovering our strength top priority.
"I understand. I will do so."

With Durandal out, we move to the fifth floor.
Roxanne guides me further in.
It seems there are less people here than there were on the fourth floor, but there is still a considerable amount.

Collagen Coral Lv5.

The Collagen Coral is the demon from the fifth floor of Quratar's Labyrinth.
It is a rock type demon.
It has one leg sticking out the bottom, and approaches us while hopping.

I attack it with Durandal.
I didn't think it would be hard,but it was quite firm.
Is it a rock like it's appearance?
No, it's not a rock, it's coral?
Since it didn't get defeated in a single blow, I strike again and defeat it.

Coral gelatine.

It vanishes in smoke and an item remains.
The item seems to be collagen. TN: Collagen – The fibrous protein constituent of bone, cartilage, tendon, and other connective tissue that converts into gelatin by boiling.

"You can make Jelly?"
"Jelly?"
"Oh, don't worry about it."

I asked Roxanne about it, but it seems to be different.

"The coral gelatin is an adhesive. The adhesive strength appears when you dissolve it in hot water. You can use it to stick carpet to the wall."

Well, it seems like a convenient item.

Collagen Coral Lv5 can't be defeated with three spells.
It doesn't lay around or roll, and instead hops when it approaches.
Roxanne takes a stance and blocks it.
She dodged a pounce, and I launch a fourth [Fire Ball] where it landed.

“It has a pounce.”
“Yes, and with the bouncing it was difficult to work out the timing.”

We avoided it magnificently in comparison to the animal who kicks out it’s leg. The foot of the Collagen Coral doesn’t bend.
It’s movements are hard to understand though.

“We’ll get used to it.”
“Yes, I think it will be safe when we become accustomed to it.”

I don’t have a safe feeling.
The surface of the Collagen Coral is extremely rough.
If that hits me it’s going to be painful.

Still, it isn’t scarier than the Cheep Sheep which has the horn, so we charged at a group of three.
Even I can manage to dodge the pounce attack if I watch it while using the wand.
It’s best to avoid it instead of trying to block it with the wand, so when they jump up I react quickly.
It’s basically one on one though.

Lets not consider the person from the wolf tribe who is fighting two of them.
I’ll feel like I lost if I worry about it.

We advance further in with Roxanne leading the way and occasionally come to a dead end.
If you don’t check these you won’t find magic crystals or treasure chests.
We open a hidden door and a small room appears.

We enter.
It’s the usual room style, with a slightly raised center.

“Master, it’s a treasure chest.”
“Treasure chest? This?
“Yes, that’s right.”

This is a treasure chest?
Instead of a chest, the floor is just a slightly raised lump.

Roxanne didn't hesitate, and rushed in to pierce it with the Scimitar.
Won't there be a trap?

"Is it safe?"
"Even if it's a mimic, there won't be anything until it's defeated."

Thank you for that strong reply.
I wanted you to do it when we at least took out Durandal.

The floor is torn up with the Scimitar.
It's possible to roll it up like a newspaper.

Equipment: Leather Bracers.

A Bracer comes out.
It's regular equipment.

So it's true that the items a person is wearing come out of the Treasure Chest.
After offering a silent prayer to the former owner, I take the equipment.

Chapter 42 – Bath

Within Quratar labyrinths fifth level, we came across a magic crystal.
By chance.
Collagen Coral Lv5

Collagen Coral Lv5

Magic Crystal

Cheep Sheep Lv5
The moment I was doing [Appraisal] on the demons, it also appeared.
For an instant I thought four had appeared.

First of all, The demons received 3 shots of [Firestorm].
With the wand I parried the Collagen Coral's ramming body attack and finished it off with a fourth shot.

"We should head straight back to our previous location."
"No, There is a magic crystal over there."

I stopped Roxanne when she tried to go back the way we came.
I go forward. To the area where I first saw the demons.
Half of a black magic crystal was buried and hidden in the ground.

"You found it even though it was dark and so far away, as expected of Master"
"It just happened to be near where we found the demons"
"Still it is difficult to find since the black magic crystal does not shine."

I see, so the black magic crystal doesn't shine?
There is a possibility I overlooked them until now.
I cannot make observations every single time but, will try to make better observations from now on even if it seems insignificant.

"Do the other crystals shine?"
"Yes, but they are very dim."

In the end it becomes a white magic crystal, I think it will shine.
It is certainly easier to find a shining one.

“In the case of black magic crystal, I can’t sell it until it accumulates magic?”
“Well, magic crystals are fusible.”

I hand the black magic crystal to Roxanne and she takes it.

“Fusible?”
“Yes, you push the two and they easily fuse into one.”
“I see, so the magic is not lost with the fusion?”
“It is fine.”

I carry some spare magic crystals so I don’t mind trying it to see.
After all they are 10 Nars.

I took out a green magic crystal from the rucksack.
I place the green one on the palm of my right hand and the black crystal that I found with my left hand I pile on top.
The black magic crystal sinks into the green one with no resistance at all.
It enters steadily when I push it with my hand.

Somehow, it is a comfortable feeling.
It’s not a hard nor a soft reaction, it feels like an exquisite resistance.
It resembles a feeling of crushing bubble wrap that goes into cardboard boxes.
I think it may become a habit.

“Is it like this?”

Only the green crystal remained once I finished fusing the crystals.
The magic crystal I found was black, so it didn’t even have 10 magic power in it.
At least 10,000 magic power is needed to change the colour of the green magic crystal, so it seems it didn’t have enough

We finished exploring the 5th floor by the time the bathtub was completed.
Beep Sheep who we’ve fought before is the boss of Vale labyrinth’s 5th floor.

The combination of demons and bosses appear to be the same in any labyrinth.

I must not let the Beep Sheep use a skill.
I stick close, always ready with Durandal which has the incantation interruption effect.
I don't jump back and instead block it's attack with the sword because I can't allow it to have an opportunity.
As long as the skill is prevented I can leave the front to Roxanne while I just focus on the back.

The coral demon in Quratar's labyrinth does not have a distinction between front and back, it's a bit troublesome.
But still when there are 2 people, attack frequency becomes half.
I swing Durandal around and somehow win.

"I will give back the medicine"

Roxanne lowers the rucksack.
Since I don't know what will happen, before the boss fight I handed the medicine to Roxanne.
It is something I learned from the previous boss fight.
It will be terrible if Roxanne is poisoned while I am affected by sleep.

If only the normal attacks have added effect then Roxanne can avoid them without a hitch.

"Isn't it alright to hold on to it until we see the demons from the sixth floor?"
"It's fine. Mino will appear on the sixth floor of the Quratar labyrinth."

Vail labyrinth's sixth floor demons as well as Quratar's second floor demons were Naive Olive.
If fighting demons I already fought then I feel relatively safe.
Because I can bring down Lv6 demons with 4 magic shots, I think sixth floor demons are not a problem.
I put away Durandal and the medicine and moved to the sixth floor.
The messenger from the woodshop came on the fifth day as promised.
After being told I could accept it straight away, he immediately went back and returned with a wagon.

"Huge"

As I was waiting outside I saw the wagon in the distance and I unintentionally let a word leave my mouth.

It's big.
The enormous round tub is put vertically on the carrying tray.
The height of the carrying tray is 1 meter and the tub is 2 meters, so about 3 meters in total.
About half of the tub was above the coachman's head.

Since there is furniture of the similar height it probably isn't that big, but when I consider that it's a tub it still seems bizarrely impressive.
As the wagon approaches, I take a look and it really is big.
It really is about 2 meters.
It seems it was made according to my request, slightly taller than a person.

"Here are the ordered goods."
"The boards are thick, it seems solid."

The boards used are fairly thick.
The bottom boards seem to be considerably thick.

"Like this it will not break soon."

The person employed to transport left with these words.
Like this it won't break.
I wonder how much water I can put in.

Let's see…
1 Litre is 1,000 cc.
Since 1 cc is 1 cubic centimetre so, 1cm x 1cm x 1cm.
So 100cm x 10cm x 1cm is 1,000cc and becomes 1 litre.
Since 1 meter is 100cm, 1 meter x 10cm x 1cm is 1 litre then 1 meter x 1 meter x 1 cm is 10 litres.
In a container size of length and width of 1 meter and depth of 1 cm can contain 10 litres of water.

Huh?
It's way more than I thought.

Since the size of the tub is radius x radius x Pi, the diameter is 2 meters then the radius is 1 meter and Pi is 3.14. [Otka: took some liberties as the Japanese was too messy to translate word by word and make sense]
The depth is 50 cm so 3.14 meters x 50 cm x 10 litres is 1570 litres?

Let's calm down.
Calm down.
It could be a mistake….. nope.
I recalculated but it was still the same.

1570 litres of water fit in this tub?
Since 1 litre of water is 1 kg then it's 1570 kg.
That is approximately 1.5 tons.

It is a tremendous amount of water.
I did not think I would need a ton for daily life.
To add to that the boards are also thick.

"Fo-for now shall we carry it to the second floor?"
"Yes, Master"

Roxanne along with 2 other people bring the tub up to the 2nd floor.
No. It's no longer a tub, it's a bathtub.
It's very heavy but because you can roll it it's not unreasonable to move it.
With two people it will be easy to push up the stairs.

We put it in the room with drainage outlet on 2nd floor.
After we brought it into the room Roxanne and the two others carefully laid it down.
Since the room is about 8 tatami size, even if I put the bathtub in there, there would still be room.

"As expected it is a mansion."
"Ermm. I wonder what is this?"
"Once you find out you will be surprised and will laugh. We will use this as a bathtub."

I declared to Roxanne.
A paradise to go in, but hell to produce the water.
I can make 10 litres of water with one [Water Wall] so I will need to cast magic as many as 157 times to make it full.

157 times?
Moreover just to make water.
My head hurts.

“A bathtub used to take a bath?”
“That’s right. I want to get it ready straight away.”
“I understand.”

I don’t know how much time it will take.
I think I should do the preparations fast.

First I lightly wash the bathtub with water, with [Water Wall] I fill the water jars with water.
Once filled, I cast [Fireball] on the water jars to heat the water.
One [Fireball] cast makes it lukewarm water, two casts make it boiling water.

I take into consideration that while preparing the hot water will cool down, after firing two casts I empty it into the bathtub.
Before the water gets too hot I should dilute it.
Because wood is different from ceramic water jars, I shouldn’t be shooting [Fireballs] at the accumulated water in the bathtub.
It would be terrible if the fire spreads.

While filling the bathtub with hot water, when magic consumed I jump to the labyrinth to replenish it.
It’s difficult.

“Like this we will take a bath about once a week.”
“What is wunsawik? TN:isshuwakan – word for one week, I guess a week does not exist there.
“…Once or twice every ten days.”

While warping to the Labyrinth several times I grumbled unintentionally.
This world does not have the concept of a week.
I think according to Roxanne I am an oddball who sometimes speaks in incomprehensible language.
I am a serious weirdo.

Midway, The temperature of the bathroom started to become hotter.
It’s like a sauna.

Only I enter and continue working while Roxanne is waiting outside.
Just being in there a short while covers me with sweat.

“Here”

When I walked out Roxanne handed me a towel.
I wipe off the sweat and again make a round trip to the labyrinth.
Do I want to take a bath with Roxanne this much?
I am really a pervert.

To the end, I was stubborn and collected the hot water in the bathtub.
I’m desperate.
For that reason I collected it.

It probably has been no less than 2 hours since the start of the preparations.
I also prepared some spare water in the water jars.

“Today with this much done. It is finished.”

The tub is about 90% filled with hot water.
The bathroom was filled with white steam.

“Good work.”
“If there’s time lets go to the labyrinth once, and after dinner take a bath.”

I receive a towel from Roxanne and wipe my sweat.
It will be fine for few hours since when I put my hand in it, it was still considerably hot.

“Umm, do I also partake?”
“Of course, that was my intention, but…?”

I wonder if Roxanne dislikes baths?
I want her to enter even if she dislikes it.
There is also an option of ordering her to enter.

“Only lords or nobles take baths. Also I was told to wait outside midway.”
“I told you to wait outside because inside is sultry. There was no reason for both of us to become drenched in sweat.”
“Was that the reason? I thought there was some special reason for master”

Did she think there was such a thing?
I return the towel and stroke her dog ears.

“Well special is special. Because I will enter together with Roxanne.”
“Eh. …eem-eermm”
“We will enter together.”
“Y-yes, thank you very much.”

What a relief.
It seems we will enter together.
If at the very end she had refused then I wouldn’t know for what reason I went through all the hardships.
After completing all the work for the day we enter the bath.
The water was still slightly too hot.
I create a [Water Wall] directly above the tub to cool the water.

Adjusting the temperature is difficult.
It is difficult to make fine adjustments with magic.
I put my right hand in the bathtub and stir it.
Is this good enough?

After a while I got the hang of making hot water, next I made about half the water jars into hot water using [Fireball].
I think it has become slightly easier. But really only slightly.
I wonder does it become slightly easier when the level increases?

I placed a lemon in the bathtub before dinner.
I’m not completely sure if it’s a lemon but, it was translated as lemon so I guess it is a lemon.

I’m not sure what kind of herbs to use to substitute iris leaves for bathwater. [Otka: seems putting 菖蒲湯 in bathwater is some sort of tradition in Japan since Edo times, I only had a brief look at it on Japanese Wiki about it, Google it for images if you are interested]
It would be terrible if it had a weird smell.
In case of hot citron bath, I wonder is it not possible to substitute for some other citrus fruit?

With the lemon there is a nice aroma.
Since it is edible it does not dissolve.

Roxanne placed a lantern in a hole within the room.
I take hot water and lightly rinse my body.
We both entered the bath after I washed Roxanne's body.

It feels good.

The mildly hot water surrounded my body.
I freely stretch my arms and legs out.
The size of the bathtub makes it feel like a hot spring.

Since there is no Kinoki cypress there is no mellow tree fragrance, but still it is relaxing. [Otka: 檜 – Kinoki Cypress is a type of tree that grows in Japan, seems to be water resilient, and based on what he said also releases a fragrance]
I place a towel on the edge of the tub and lay my head on it.

Roxanne also lies down.
I extended my arm and embraced her.
It feels good.

Her lean and flexible body comes close next to me.
Since she was floating I was able to easily come closer.
Our feet twine and cling together.

In the hot water Roxanne's skin is smooth.
It is softly smooth making it feel very good.

"Mmm, it's the best."
"Yes, it is a splendid feeling."

She might have gotten the wrong meaning, but if Roxanne is fine with it then it is all good.

Something brushed against my knee in the water.
It is strangely comfortable.
I stretch a hand out as I wonder what it could be.
It's a tail.

Roxanne's tail spread like water plant in the bath.
When scooping with my arm there is a soft brush impression brushing on

my hand.
In the water I stroked her with my hand gently.
This is an unexpected discovery.

“Roxanne’s tail feels good.”
“Is that so? Thank you very much.”

I stretch my hand, the tail is swinging many times.
It sways gently in the water.
The tail waves like a gentle breeze passing through.
Roxanne’s tail is pleasant in the bath.

It is way better to take a bath with Roxanne that I had thought it would be.
The preparations are difficult to do every day but, once every ten- no once every week- no once every five days I want to enter.
Once every 3 days is also fine.

I moved my body and soaked my head.
The hot water soaks through the hair.
I scrubbed my head in the hot water.
I scrubbed my head several times until all the dirt was out, and then raise my head.

「著作権保護コンテンツ」

「うーん、最高だ」

ロクサーヌと一緒に風呂に入るのは、
思った以上に素晴らしい。

異世界迷宮でハーレムを

「著作権保護コンテンツ」

“It feels good. Roxanne should try it also.”
“Yes”

Roxanne soaked her head in hot water.
I stretched my hands out and scrubbed Roxanne’s hair.
I also washed her dog ears.

Her hair does not have the same feeling as her tail.
Still it will cling to my finger due to the moisture.

Roxanne was submerged in the water for nearly a minute.
Soon her upper body rises and the water runs down.
When she rose from the water I secretly stared at her huge mountains that were shaking *gaburun**gaburun*.

「著作権保護コンテンツ」

お湯の中、ロクサーヌの肌はなめらかだ。
しっとりかつさらさらしていて、気持ちがいい。

「はい。とてもいい気分です」

「著作権保護コンテンツ」

Yup I knew it baths are great.
Baths are the best.

Chapter 43 - Rare ingredients

Weapons merchant Lv1
Effects:
Small physical strength rise.
Small intelligence rise.
Small mind rise.

Skills:
Weapon appraisal.
Item box calculation.

Armor merchant Lv1
Effects:
Small physical strength rise.
Small intelligence rise.
Small spirit rise.

Skills:
Armor appraisal.
Item box calculation.

Cook Lv1
Effects:
Small dexterity rise. (TN : in cooking skill 器用小上昇)
Small physical strength rise.
Small agility rise.

Skills:
Drop rate for rare ingredients increase.
Item box operation (TN : Not sure about this one because it's like he is always saying this : ボックス操作)

The number of jobs increased.
A weapon merchant, an armor merchant, and a cook.
To be frank, all these skills and effects are questionable.

Because I have "Judgement", both weapon merchant and armor merchant have no effective use.
At the very least, the effect, small intelligence rise, is good

I would be overjoyed if some nasty looting job existed (TN : Not sure but i think it's the meaning of this : 派生ジョブ があったりしたら
厄介なことこの上ない。)

The increase of rare ingredients drop rate should be useful.
However, I would hate if I killed a bunch of Kobold and only got Kobold salt.
(TN : I would hate it too ahah.)
Would it be alright if it's not a rare drop?

Even if it's a cook job, it seems to have no useful skill to make a dish.
The last skill may be used for the labyrinth exploration?
It would be good if we can keep the ingredients in the item box.
With three jobs, I can stack up to thirty pieces of thirty different items for each job.

You may think that's it's because I'm an Explorer Lv30
But the size of the item box suddenly became 60 x 30 when I attached another job which surprised me at first.
Because my job is Lv1, the size would be fixed regardless of the level.

Kaga Michio Male 17 years old
Explorer Lv30.
Hero Lv27.
Wizard Lv29.
Monk Lv26.
Cook Lv1.
Equipment:
Leather gloves.
Leather shoes.
Leather hat.
Wand.

Roxanne Girl 16 years old
Beast warrior Lv14
Equipment :
Scimitar
Leather gloves
Leather jacket
Leather hat
Sandals
Wooden Shield.

I do a trial with the cooking job.
However, even after I beat the enemies from the six floors, they didn't drop any rare ingredients.
I don't know whether the olive oil you can buy at the guild is regarded as ingredients, but it wouldn't be rare at least.
The mino didn't drop any of it either
It's a useless cow.

I decide to push forward the search as much as I can.
Because I understood that it was troublesome to set up hot water, I decided to do it only when we took a bath or if something special come up.

Now it's a suitable time to advance to the next floor.

Thanks to me being enthusiastic the exploration of the labyrinth advanced smoothly, and the sixth floor was passed in no time.
By chance there was a room with the boss nearby.

It's troublesome, so I thought I might only fill and heat the bath at special times, but since it's hard to do it's best to plan for it.
Things don't always go the way we want.

Every floor of the Labyrinth has the same setup. There's always monsters to fight, and then a boss to defeat.
We cleared it with no problems.

Escape goat Lv7
Escape goat Lv7

The demons of the seventh floor seem to be an escape goat.

"I have heard that Escape Goat runs away. Maybe it's better not to use magic and to knock it down with your sword, Master"

Even if Roxanne warned me, I activated my magic.
It's too late anyways.
Does the goat escape according to his name?

However, the escape goat comes without running away.
Roxanne stepped forward, facing the goat.
I prepared Durandal in the meantime.

The escape goat does not look that ferocious, but it looks stern.
The goat didn't look pretty at all.
The head's horn is bigger than a cheep sheep.
It has an ominous looking upward curve.

I sneaked around to the left and let the goat meet with Durandal
I cut it right in the middle of the body but it wasn't enough to defeat him.
When it comes down to lvl7 it seem that Durandal and a shot from magic isn't enough to defeat them.

The Escape Goat holds it's head low.
As soon as it watches me moving the goat is rushing me head on.
I turned around suddenly and avoided the dash of the goat.
I did it just in time.

The goat went between Roxanne and me.
However, the demon did not stop.
As soon as he went to the other side he began to run.

Ooopps !
The escape Goat escaped.

I swing Durandal in a hurry but it couldn't reach any more.
There is no possibility to chase him in time, so i have to rely on magic.
I invoked [fire storm]
Sparks fly as my second spell is activated.

As long as I can see the demon, I can attack him.
The demon is covered in fire and falls down.
What a relief…
It seems that the amount of damage from Durandal and Magic was enough.

Roxanne is still fighting, the second one did not run away yet.
I driven in Durandal from the side.
The demon falls, It becomes smoke and it disappears.
I killed him with a single blow.

I seem to be able to knock down the escape Goat lv7 with two magic and a blow from Durandal.
The fact that it's running away is really troublesome.

The next one Roxanne found was a cheep sheep Lv7.
Because it's only one of them, i engage with a [fire ball].
I did two then three shots, while watching Roxanne keeping the front busy while avoiding the offensive coming from the sheep.
I go around the side and i shot the fourth and fifth balls.

"I'm afraid it's at least five shot from magic for a Lv7."
"I guess that's how it is for the seventh floor."

It's easy to say.
It's necessary to face the demon for a long time to knock it down.
When a fight lasts long, the number of chances the enemy has to hit also increases.

Even with Roxanne to support me, it isn't easy.
We should take the conquering of the seventh floor slowly seeing this course of events.

I tried to intercept the escape Goat who appeared in front of us with magic
When i did the third shot, it turned around and started to run.
Perhaps it doesn't run away at random, but will escape when receiving a certain amount of damage.
The conditions are : two magics are okay and the third will make him run.

Because of the physical strength it seems to have, i would need 5 emissions of magic to take it down.
After i hit it with 2 shots, i tried to shoot it again three times when it reached sword range.

It avoided the fifth fire ball.
The monster is escaping toward the back.
It is a nuisance to see him running away at the third shot.
Although, it is alright if yo uses storm type of magic.

"It is a troublesome demon"
"It doesn't want to fight much"

“That’s right, it’s a bit annoying, but if other demons show up let’s prioritize them”

After shooting two magics, it is possible to take it out with Durandal.
I don’t want to avoid it specially and it becomes a good balance with MP and efficiency.
An extra burden is added for Roxanne in the vanguard but there is no helping it.

Even if you say it’s troublesome the only thing the escape goat is doing is running away.
It seems the seventh floor will be a bit of a struggle.

Demons from the seventh floor of Quratar’s labyrinth even moved here.
The demon from Quratar’s labyrinth is a Slow Rabbit Lv7.

It made me nostalgic, I fought a Slow Rabbit back in the forest near the first village.

It seems to mean that there was a labyrinth in that forest and one of the monsters from the first floor is a slow rabbit?
Because there was no entrance, it’s a child labyrinth which didn’t have 50 floors yet.

The attacks from the slow rabbit are slow, and it’s only a body crash type of attack, it’s easy to fight it barehanded.
Is it the same for the one’s from the seventh floor of Quratar’s Labyrinth?
The demon jumped when i approached it.
I’m happy to encounter one of them after all this time.
It seems that any demons in the labyrinth are active and attack whenever they see a person.

I destroyed him with 5 shots of magic.
So the slow rabbit Lv.7 needs the same amount of shots as other demons on the floor.

The slow rabbit can drop a rare ingredient, it’s rabbit meat.
The time when the cook’s ability is demonstrated had finally come.
I thought I had it but then it’s a rabbit fur that came out.

“It’s a fur from a rabbit? Do you think think a merchant is willing to buy it in the merchant place?”
“In case of rabbit’s fur, I think they buy it in a high quality clothing shop in the imperial capital.”

Roxanne picks up the rabbit’s fur and hands it to me.

“Is that so?”
“Yeah, they would, in a shop similar to the one you were at the other day Master.”
“I wonder why they would buy rabbit fur.”

The items that the demons from the early floors leave are common and a lot of people can get them for themselves, it is not that it is unusable, but there is a lot of stock if you go to the guild.
However, i heard that it was rare and there is a request especially going out.
I wonder, why would they buy rabbit’s fur?

“It’s because the coats which are made from rabbit fur are really strong against cold and it’s good as a winter proof clothing and in particular, it seems to be really popular among the noble women that never go out without rabbit fur.”
“I see.”
“The atelier and the shop that makes the high quality clothing always compete to create coats with the latest style. Because a lot of wages rely on processing the slow rabbit’s fur and i heard that it has a large amount of profit.”

The women’s fashion competition seems to be severe, even in this world.
TN: Everywhere the girls are just some shopping maniacs (sorry i had to say it)
Fur might even be a staple part of their fashion.

“Does Roxanne want a coat made from rabbit’s fur too?”
“I’m from the beast race, so I’m already strong against the cold, also a slave shouldn’t wear something like that”
“You are strong against the cold?”
“Yes”

In other words, the light clothes are all right.
Being lightly dressed looks really good on Roxanne

The clothes with a lot of exposures of skin, i think that clothes which show the curve from the chest are suited the highest.

Later, after eating rabbit meat for breakfast, i proceeded to the imperial capital, i went for the high quality shop.

The leftover rabbit meat was sold to Quratar's butcher.
We killed around 40 Slow Rabbit's and ended up with 4 Rabbit's meat.
The cooking job increases the drop rate of rare ingredients, but it doesn't seem to be much.

"Irasshaimase" (TN : Welcome)

When Roxanne and I entered the boutique in the imperial capital, the shop assistant lowered his head.
He is completely facing the ground in a really polite way.
As excepted of a high quality shop.

"I came here to sell you some rabbit's fur"
"Would you follow me over here, please?"

I am led to a place to meet with the cashier, i enter the shop and head to the back.

"Hello, how may i help you?"
"The customer is here to sell rabbit's fur"
The talk from the assistant woman with the cashier succeeded.

"Can you show us the rabbit's fur?"
"Here"

I took out the rabbit's fur and placed it over the tray, after taking everything out it covered the whole tray.

"It's 34 pieces in total, is it fine?"

The cashier inspects every item one by one, then nods once and bring them inside the back and came out with another tray.
On the tray is 8 silver coins and a large amount of copper coins
A piece of fur is 20 nars, for 34 piece with 30 % up it reach 884 nars

There should be eighty-four copper coins.
I receive the payment without counting it because it's troublesome and I wouldn't be cheated in a luxury store.

"Alright, I received the payment"
"Thank you, we are looking forward to your next visit."

The male at the cash register did the most respectful salutation.
It's a good attitude considering I'm not a customer.

The guest is put at honor in such a shop and they probably doesn't welcome many explorer's or adventurer's, considering that in a high quality shop in the imperial capital the main visitors are noble women.
As I have a little improper feeling, I try to go out of the shop.
A line of clothes aside from me entered in my line of sight.

Clean beautiful clothes with glossy luster, probably the clothes for women.
It seems to have a thin shoulder strap.
it's a camisole.

When i took it in my hand to have a look here was a nice skirt with a good length, it's a camisole dress (TN :http://thumbnail.image.rakuten.co.jp/@0_mall/mel/cabinet/2011/08/81-53308-c.jpg?_ex=300×300&s=2&r=1)
Is the cloth in satin? It's really thin. Though it is not transparent, it's subtle in certain places.

"This is really popular among aristocratic women and the like. It is used as underwear and nightshirts"

The female assistant who has come out first explained to me.
It seems to not be the kind of product a man would stare at.
I hastily put back the clothes.

"How is it?"

Roxanne asked me.

"Well that's…"

The clothes are not bad, Roxanne looks good with light clothes, and if she was to wear it on top of the skin.

“It would really suit you, how much is it?”
“It’s really cheap with the price of eight hundred nars”

High quality is expensive, it’s more than the whole clothes we have except for the accessories i wear right now.
I thought it would be even higher because it’s silk, but it’s not that much.

“How about we buy two of them? Which one do you want?”
“I want this one”

I nodded and let Roxanne choose.
She took the one i watched at the beginning.
Because it’s a high quality store the colours are really good.

Blue feels soft.
Red has a little harsh feel.
Green is really a nice colour.
Yellow, pale but beautiful is also a good color.
Black, although it is black it’s also a good.

“I like the color of the first one”

Roxanne pointed at the pink one.
The pink one is lovely, it’s not shocking pink but pale pink.

“Certainly”
“Please”

Roxanne chooses slowly and carefully while talking with the assistant.

“I am impressed, it looks like it would tear apart immediately but it has been produced carefully”
“Yeah, it is, because it’s a good fabric”.
“How do you wash it?”
“You lightly stroke it with your hand in the water.”

After all, it's two of them, the white one and the pink one.
I bought it with thirty percent discount.

I think that i have successfully fallen into a trap from the shop side.
The polite attitude wasn't the thing causing the bad feeling here.
In the vicinity of the cash register, cheap small articles that explorers seem to be able to buy were placed there.
I think that this sales strategy has been completed really well.

Even with this, it was probably not a bad purchase.

Later I looked at Roxanne who wore the light pink colored camisole after the bath and strengthened my thought.
It was definitely not a bad purchase.
A wonderful piece.

"Wow i love it! It really suits you"
"Thank you Master"

The light pink color sightly changes the color of Roxanne's skin.
Roxanne was delicate and elegant, I kindly hugged her.
Surrounding the wet body of Roxanne, i did not just hug her, I also caress the lines of her body.

I'm sinking into two big masses of mountains.
I mean stuck, and lifting them.
They are lifted by the terrible ero activity coming from inside me.

At the summit there is a tiny bump.
It's the rare ingredient part of the fruit.

When put under the light with thin clothes the swelling of the chest is ferocious.
The power is different.
Because it's Roxanne's chest, it's also wonderful when it's not dressed, but because it's a single piece of clothe, the feeling coming from the chest increases.

The clothes are neat and clean but contain something violent.
Shining lustrously combined with the glossy piece of silk.
After all, i think that what i bought was good.

“Ahh this is the best”
“Um, wh….”

The argument was sealed inside her mouth.
Uhhhh ~
It cannot be helped i was at my limit.
I just finished with the bath a while ago but it looks like i just have to go for a second round.

Chapter 44 - Alchemy

The Escape Goat that appears on Vale Labyrinths seventh floor is quite troublesome.
It runs away after three blows from magic or a single blow from Durandal.
When more than one appear, I have to quickly use five casts of [Fire Storm] to defeat them before they escape.
Even then, there is still the chance they will get away.

It's even harder if they come out in a group with other monsters.
The timing of casting the fifth spell might be too slow if I have to exchange blows with a demon that came with it.
It's best to use Durandal as a finisher.

First you use two magic shots.
Then you swing Durandal & the Escape Goat is killed.
The rest of the demons can be defeated without Durandal and only using magic.

There's no room for error.
Even so, the efficiency is quite good.

Well, I guess I don't really know for sure if the efficiency is good.
How fast does a fight need to be to make up for decreasing my [increased experienced] stat?
I can use the [10x increased experience] stat while using magic, but I've had to stop using [10x increased experience] to use Durandal on the Escape Goat's so killing other demons is might be better.
Well, as long as the level of my Cook job is increasing I'm not really worried.

"So, you can't use magic while using the sword?"

Roxanne asked while picking up the Goat Thread which was dropped by the Escape Goat.
It was the item I expected.

"It's usable, but it will be less efficient. Is it causing trouble for Roxanne?"
"No, I am fine."
"You're very good as a vanguard, and you help me a lot."
"Thank you."

Sometimes Roxanne has to keep demons busy while I take time to get out Durandal.
I have a very high opinion of Roxanne's agility.
She'll almost never get hit even when fighting two or three demons.

I don't know what things will be like in the future though.
Demon groups on the eighth floor can have up to four demons.
It's something I need to think about.

Slow Rabbit's started appearing on Quratar's seventh floor and leave Rabbit furs.
To sell the furs we've been making a regular trip to the imperial capital.
There's quite a variety of shops in the capital.
It's because of the large amount of people that there is such a variety.

The furs are sold off as we walk around.
There's a seasoning shop.
It has vinegar and fish sauce.

I was excited to taste it, but it didn't taste anything like soy sauce.
The smell of it isn't good either.
It reminds me of something from the Honshu area.
It might be good to cook pork with.

People open stall's in the imperial capital's main street to sell stuff as well.
Fast food in this world is limited to night stalls.
There's a pizza style shop, and a crepe shop, and a shop selling chicken meat on sticks too.

There's stalls making stuff and selling it straight away.
One stall has a food that's a brown fried sort of color.
There's a lot of children gathering there, is it cheap candy?

"Do you know what they are selling there?"
"I'm not sure."
"Want to try some?"

I leave Roxanne and go stand in line.
While looking at the cheap brown candy I saw something like a wafer.
Is there such a thing here?

“They are 10 nars each.”
“I’ll take two.”

After ordering, the worker poured some kind of liquid into a small pan.
The wafer is in there and disappears into the liquid.
Will it be some kind of sponge?

Soon the liquid begins to expand.
A thick mountain appears in the pan.
The nearby children start cheering.

“It’s done.”

The workman removes it from the pan.
He wraps it in some kind of leaf and passes it to me.
I take out some nars and pay for it.
He’s a villager so my 30% discount doesn’t apply.

One is given to Roxanne.
The second one I passed to a cute girl nearby.

“Would you like this?”
“Yes.”

There’s no real reason.
It’s just a cute girl.
After that she waved cheerfully and left.

“Was it good?”
“The taste is unusual.”

I know what it is.
It’s caramel.
I learnt to make it in junior high school.

I don’t really remember the taste though.
I’m not sure if I could judge if it’s exactly the same even if I try it now.
I just have a memory of not thinking it was very delicious.

“It’s sweet and delicious.”

Oh wow, Roxanne is enthusiastically filling her mouth. It has a similar feeling to a modern Japanese high school student eating cake.
I watch the stall from nearby as I wait for Roxanne to finish.

When caramel melts from the heat of bicarbonate soda in liquid the carbonate acid dissipates and causes swelling.
I think that the stall making the cheap sweets uses the same method.
When the pan is warmed, the liquid swells rapidly.

The worker turns to the back as I watch.
A small box is opened, and something is taken out.
A powder was taken out, and placed in a tub of water. The liquid which becomes the origin of the caramel has been created.

Chance.
I use [Judgement] on the box.
It seems I can't identify the powder.
If some of the item is missing, like a handful of Kobald Salt, then it can no longer be identified and will also no longer go into the item box.

Kobold Sucrose

Shell Powder

I could work out that Kobald Sucrose and Shell Powder were components of the powder in the box.
Even if I ask the worker directly, he won't tell me because it's a business secret.
I don't want to make Caramel on it's own, so if I can find out the raw materials name then that's good enough.

Maybe the worker is mixing flour with the Kobald Sucrose and Shell Powder.
If sugar and bicarbonate of soda are mixed with flour then you can make caramel.
The Sucrose is sugar.
The Shell Powder must be bicarbonate of soda.

Shell powder = bicarbonate of soda = sodium hydrogencarbonate

“Ready to go?”
“Yes, Thank you for the delicious meal.”

I headed towards the adventurers guild with Roxanne when she finished eating.

“Do you know anything about Shell Powder?”
“It’s an extinguisher.”
“An extinguisher?”
“There isn’t any power to cancel out fire magic, but you can extinguish it as soon as possible and stop the fire from spreading as soon as possible with an extinguisher. With an extract from scallop shells and shell leaves you can counter-act the magic once.”

It’s different to bicarbonate of soda.
Well, the effects against magic shouldn’t matter.

“Can you mix it with flour and bake it, or use it for cleaning?”
“The Shell Powder?”
“Yes.”
“I haven’t heard anything like that.”

It’s different.

“Do you use vinegar to clean?”
“I haven’t heard of that.”

I asked just to check, but it seems even vinegar isn’t used.
There is vinegar in this world.
Vinegar is acidic, Bicarbonate of soda is an alkaline and both should be effective to wash off dirt.
If vinegar isn’t used for cleaning then the possibility they don’t know about using bicarbonate of soda for cleaning is high.

I bought some Shell Powder in the adventurers guild. I also bought a pan, and some wheat bran and then returned to the house.

I’m experimenting making caramel, though the main purpose isn’t the caramel.
Soap can be made using rice bran.

When the fatty acids in the vegetable oil react with the bicarbonate of soda, then it should become soap.

While in a school group, I had to make it in front of a teacher on my own, so I remember how to do it.
Bad memories.
All the members of the group should have had to help out.

Anyway, if there is bicarbonate of soda, then I can make soap.
Although it isn't right, rice bran should be able to be replaced with the vegetable oil.
First I'll try and use the wheat bran though.
Rice bran was probably only a substitute in the old days too.

After returning I went straight to the kitchen.
I brought half a pan of water to the boil.
If it works, this pan will be used exclusively for soap.

Shell Powder was put through the mill and added to the boiling water.
Bubbles come out.
It seems correct that Shell Powder is bicarbonate of soda.

After the bubbles die down, the wheat bran is added.
I'm just adding it gradually since I don't know how much.
I recall that I had to add alot of rice bran.
It probably can't be helped if I fail at first.

As I mix it a brown muddy liquid forms.
It seems to be going better than I expected.
I'm starting to get worn out from stirring it.

"What is this?"

Roxanne had been cleaning, but came over out of interest.

"Soap."
"Soap? Is it going well?"
"I'm not sure yet."
"Making soap is amazing."

I wouldn't have even thought of trying to make it if I didn't know how to make it.
Soap seems like it would be quite valuable in this world.
It will be quite useful if I can make it well.

"If you use the Shell Powder for cleaning then the dirt will come right off."
"Really?"
"Yes."
"I had no idea. I'll try it now."
"If you find dirt that the Shell Powder doesn't work on, try using vinegar instead and it might work."

Bicarbonate of soda is an alkaline and works extremely well against acidic dirt, but it's not very effective against alkaline dirt.
Acidic vinegar is used on the alkaline dirt.
The Shell Powder seems to have numerous uses.
I remember hearing that the hot spring at Nagano, where I went for my skiing training camp during junior high school was a bicarbonate of soda spring, so I can probably try and add some to the bath.

"Well, how do I use it? Do I just have to rub it on?"

Even though Roxanne raced off with excitement, she returned straight away.
The idea of dissolving it in water doesn't seem to exist here.

"No, you should try dissolving it in water and then using it for wiping."

I've never actually tried it, it's just general knowledge.
Well, I think it's supposed to be dissolved in water.

"Master, this is amazing."

Before long, Roxanne flies back in with her eyes sparkling.
It seems that I was right.

I take the pan off the fire.
This looks to be going well also.
It will be finished now once it's dry.

That night, it appears that my jobs have increased.

Alchemist Lv1
Effect: Small int rise, Medium dex rise, Skill – Plating.

An Alchemist.
Since making soap is a chemical reaction I likely got it from that.
The next morning I went to the Labyrinth.
I immediately tested out the Alchemist.

Kaga Michio: 17 year old male. Explorer Lv32, Hero Lv30, Wizard Lv32, Monk Lv30, Cook Lv25, Alchemist Lv1.
Equipment: Leather Gloves, Leather Armor, Leather Hat, Leather Shoes, Wand.

Roxanne: 16 year old female. Beast Warrior Lv18
Equipment: Sandals, Leather Jacket, Leather Hat, Wooden Shield, Scimitar.

I'm over-straining my points a bit and using the sixth job this time.
Monk is for emergencies, and Cook is for the rare ingredient drops from the Slow Rabbit.

My bonus points are currently distributed like this:
[Required Experience decreased to 10%] 31 points.
[Increased experience by 10x] 31 points.
[Crystallization increased by 32x] 31 points.
[Sixth Job] 31 points.
[Incantation omission] 3 points.
[Job Settings] [Judgement] [Character reset] 1 point each.
A total of 130 points.

When I don't have the sixth job I use [5x MP recovery Speed].
When I became Explorer Lv31 and started to use the sixth job I started having to use Durandal more often for MP recovery.
The [MP Recovery Speed] skill probably is based on my natural recovery rate.
There is a noticeable difference when I go up to 5x.

Even so, the difference isn't that extreme.
I went to the Labyrinth of Vale after breakfast to try out the Alchemist job.
Even if I use a sixth job instead of MP recovery speed the difference isn't

really a problem.
The difference is that small.

“Since I’m experimenting, can you try to find a single demon?”
“Certainly.”
“Thank you.”

What experiment am I doing? The Alchemists skill. I’m testing out [Plating].
When I tried to use [Plating] it required a target, so it isn’t a passive skill.
I tried [Plating] the pocket knife and the leather equipment but it didn’t work.

Maybe it can be used on something living, not an object.
The name sounds like it might be a defensive skill, but I can’t rule out it being offensive so I’ll try it on a demon first.
After [Plating] it, maybe it will become fragile and easy to break.

“May I ask what experiment you are doing this time?”

Roxanne spoke as we moved.
There have been a lot of experiments getting done since I met Roxanne.
Even yesterday had the experiment to make soap.
When her master does an experiment she might be quite amazed.

“Do you know about the job Alchemist?”
“Um, they are people who try to create money.”

They have that sort of person in this world?
Well, if you get the alchemist job from doing a chemical reaction then maybe it’s natural.
Aiming to make money with a chemical reaction is alchemy.

“This test is about the alchemist job.”
“Can you make money?”

Roxanne opened her eyes wide.

“No, yes, well, I’m not sure…”

Since there is magic in the world there may be a skill that produces money.
Or maybe not, the value of money would drop significantly if there was such a skill.
Or, it might be an extremely well kept secret.

Well, for now the only thing I can do is test [Plating].
Plating is that thing.
Covering something in brass and telling people that it's gold.
It's just fake.

"Here's one."

While lost in my own thoughts, Roxanne gets my attention.
A Slow Rabbit appeared, and I tried to activate [Plating] on it.
There doesn't seem to be any changes on the Slow Rabbit.
Isn't it an attack skill?

In the end it still took five spells to kill the Slow Rabbit Lv7.
It seems like it isn't an attack skill.
I tried attacking one with Durandal instead of magic, but there still didn't seem to be an effect.
If it's an attack skill, does it have special conditions? Or is the Slow Rabbit resistant to it?

Later, after breakfast, we head to Vale Labyrinth's second floor.
I put my bonus points into Intellect and found that I could kill something with one spell.
Previously it was impossible to kill something in one spell even with 99 bonus points into Intellect, so my spells have become stronger as my level went up.

I tried [Plating] a Needle Wood Lv2.
I wasn't able to defeat it in one shot.

So it seems that Plating is a defensive skill.
If you consider the name, perhaps it is a skill that makes a defensive covering.

Since it still took 5 spells to defeat the Lv7 Slow Rabbit, it seems that the decrease in damage is less than 20%.
I thought of it, but I'm not sure.

Maybe Plating only works once?
If it's a defensive layer, maybe it breaks after the first attack?

It should be easy to test.
After [Plating] the Needle Wood, Roxanne attacks it once with the Scimitar, and then I attack it once with magic.
It's defeated in a single spell.
It seems to decrease the damage of one blow.

It is not possible to defeat it if the Scimitar is the second attack.
If Roxanne attacks it first, and then it's plated again, it is not possible to defeat it with a [Fireball].
Since the plated Needle Wood isn't able to be defeated with one spell even with 99 bonus points in Intellect I can't be certain how much the damage reduction really is.

I continued to experiment with [Plating] as we moved through the floor.
I got a rough understanding of the skill.

[Plating] is a one attack only defense skill.
It doesn't matter if it's against magic or physical attacks.
There is no effect from additional casts before being hit.
The damage reduction is probably between 10% and 20%.

It isn't strong, but it's still a valuable defensive skill.
I will regularly use it in the future.

Chapter 45 – Soap

The soap is still fairly soft after nearly one day's time.
Is it properly hardening like this?
For the middle school experiment, if I'm not mistaken, the teacher had hardened them in the refrigerator and immediately they were all used up playing. I don't know how much drying is needed.

After dinner, the thing more than being called soap, it looks like butter, is applied to the towel and I try washing Roxanne.
I have naked Roxanne stand in the bathroom.

Roxanne has a good figure.
In its own way tall yet slim and long slender limbs.
Her chest as if it isn't enough is violently equipped and full bodied.
From her hips, her thigh's line also slopes gently. She has a narrow waist and a tail.

"Ermm. Master first."
"No. It's an experiment, so."

Roxanne who said that thoughtlessly is swiftly silent.
Was she thinking for what purpose did I make the soap?
To wash Roxanne.
Even though that's the sole purpose that I made it for.

I want to wash Roxanne immediately. I want to cover her in foam.
Anything more than that must be firmly rejected.
In a firm manner, I reject Roxanne's offer.

"O-of course."

Seems Roxanne understands.

However if I think about it, I'm testing on a living person!
Because I don't know if I really was able to make soap.
Like not suiting the skin because it's too alkaline might be possible.
It'll be a problem if she turns like the Hare of Inaba.
I rub it on the towel soaked in hot water and it forms bubbles.
First I try putting it on my hand.

The amount of foam is satisfactory.
It's good enough. But it's not to the level of the body shampoo at home; more or less, there's no helping it.
My hand didn't sting or feel itchy.
Wouldn't that mean that I was able to make an adequate soap?

I try to spread it on my arm too.
Seems there's no problem.

"Then, extend out your arms."
"Yes."

I take hold of Roxanne's extended left hand.
I cover her supple hand in bubbles.
I insert my fingers in-between her fingers.
Little by little, moving up and down in a piston like motion.
Somewhat it feels good.
It's a pleasant feeling, doing it gently.

"Just in case, since this is the first time and an experiment, if there's any discomfort, tell me."
"Understood."

After washing her hand, I spread it on her arms.
After enjoying the tenderness of her upper arms, I move to the armpits.
Inserting my palms, I rub them many times over.
The towel is only used to take the produced foam from all of Roxanne's washing which is done with my own bare hands.

Following the armpits, I move hurriedly to the long awaited base of the mounts.
*As swift as the wind.
Those violent mountains were standing calmly.
*As quiet as the forest.
Moving towards the snow capped peaks, I cover them in white.
*As daring as fire.
Whenever I wash them, I cause them to vibrate. The soap bubbles look like they shake and jiggle, is it my imagination?
T-this is amazing.

It wasn't my imagination.
While washing, shaking it a little, and the summits do immensely…
*As immovable as the mountain.
Slowly, plentifully, thoroughly and carefully I finish washing her.
Her stomach and neck are covered in foam too. Then I move to her back.

"Since today is the first time, I'll wash your back, hair and tail, but tomorrow won't."
"Is that so?"
"I heard soap is not good for the hair."
"Is that so???"
"Probably."

I think I heard that somewhere in the past.
That's why something like Shampoo was specially made; that shouldn't necessarily be wrong.
Undoubtedly it's better not to wash it daily.

I fully cover the fur on her back in bubbles.
Swaying and fluffy, I knead with both my hands.

Continuing from the back, I wash her tail.
While rubbing the tail's fur between both hands, I carefully wash it.
Being silky smooth and soft, it feels good.
Her lower half is washed without reservations. With my own hands.

After covering everywhere in foam, I go towards her head.
I take some foam from the hand towel and churns lively like if it was boiling.

Not only do I wash her hair but also her dog ears.
Normally I can touch them as much as I want; I must gratefully wash them.
Both sides of her dog ears, the base section, the indented parts, etc. I rub them all with my fingers so there's no place unwashed.

I let go of her ears and the foam drips from her hair onto her face.
Roxanne closes her eyes.

Confirming that she keeps her eyes closed while washing her hair, I am enjoying her full body.
Subsequently at last, I wash her face and cheeks too.
I completely cover her in bubbles.

Like wearing clothes made of white foam, it's strangely charming.
Is it because here and there, there's bare skin visible?
The foam is giving a sexy impression of torn clothes.
Or, is it after all just because of the foam?
Holding her with my hands, I can touch her bare skin.

"…E-ermm."

Oh no.
Without thinking, I embrace her.
It's what they call an irresistible force.

"Doing like this, one can efficiently wash with very little soap. In my home town, it is a traditional way of washing between a man and woman intimately."

I enumerate a bunch of lies.
Because of this occasion, I rub with all my heart; I get my fill of Roxanne covered in bubbles.
The combined feeling of moist skin and slippery soap is extremely pleasant.

"Is that so?"
"That's right."

I forcefully affirm it.
My heart aches a bit at Roxanne being so obedient, but there's no helping it.

As for everything, the first time is critical.
But actually, finished washing in general, after demanding to do that, I might be considered a pervert.
If from the beginning, imprinting that this is normal, next time too, there shouldn't be any resistance.
"W-well then, I will now wash Master's body."

Roxanne shyly moves her hands around my back.
As expected, precedence is necessary.

I entrust everything to Roxanne to wash.
Beyond that foam, the bouncy mountains are rampaging.
Even under normal circumstances, those violent bulges that are foul play

are used too.
Awesome.

“Thanks. It feels good to be washed by Roxanne!”
“Ermm. If you’re okay with it.”

I’m washed everywhere by Roxanne.
No. Things like the hair, the hair.

“Then I’ll start rinsing.”

After being washed, hot water is drawn with the bucket and slowly poured from the top of the head.
The foam is washed away from the whole body.
We alternately draw hot water and wash it off.

“It feels good being so smooth.”

After washing off the soap, Roxanne strokes her own arm.
She delightfully smiles from ear to ear. It seems satisfying.

“No problems!?”
“Yes, I’m alright. Somehow I feel like I’ve been reborn.”
“You’re pretty to begin with. I think you haven’t changed much.”
“T-thank you.”

Eh?
Right now, should I have said something like “You’re pretty to begin with, but now you have become beautiful”?
As expected to praise her to such extent.
In reality, is it ok to say “You’re beautiful to begin with; even now your beauty hasn’t changed much.”?

The next morning, with a body feeling refreshed from being washed with soap, we enter Quratar’s Labyrinth.
The refreshed feeling is from being washed with soap; there’s no other ulterior motive.
Although I can’t completely deny it.

At times like this, feeling so good, one can think something nice might happen.

While thinking that, I eat the full ramming attack from the Slow Rabbit.
Damn!
Because of this good mood, I shouldn't have been any less careful than normal days.

Because I properly applied [Plating], to some extent, there is very little impact.
I strike it with the wand in a fit of anger. I start casting a fourth [Fire Storm].
After shooting the fifth shot, I'm alright.

The fire embers dance; the monster is beaten.
The Slow Rabbit that dealt the ramming attack disappears into smoke.
It serves you right!

Staring at the visage flying.
Thereupon, the smoke dissipates and a small thing that's neither rabbit fur nor rabbit meat is left behind.
Eh? This is the first I've seen!

"Master, you have done it. It's a Monster Card."

Roxanne jumps at it before I could even use [Analyze] to know what it is.
Oh! So this is a Monster Card?

[Monster Card Rabbit]

No doubt even with [Analyze].
It's a card the same size as an Intelligence Card.
It's similar to the Intelligence Card of the thieves; there's nothing written on it.

"This is the so called?"
"Yes. This is my first time seeing it too."
"Even though it's your first time seeing one, you immediately understood it's a Monster Card."
"Because I've heard about them."

Just hearing about it, you knew?
But it's some sort of card no matter how you look it.

"Is that so too?"
"Because of Master steadily clearing the monsters, I thought we would eventually get to see one, but seeing one so soon, I'm impressed."

For someone entering a labyrinth, this could be considered one of the objectives.
Up till now, even though we have hunted a fair amount of monsters, not one had dropped before; it's a pretty rare drop.
It probably can be sold for a lot.

However, I don't plan to sell this Monster Card yet.
It should be able to be installed in an equipment's empty slot.

But for that purpose, we somehow need a Master Smith.
To fuse the monster card to an equipment, the skill of a Master Smith is needed and only dwarves can become them.

The opportunity comes up soon after.
At the time we finish exploring Quratar's labyrinth, the magic crystal has become yellow.

A yellow magic crystal.
Seems you can sell it for 100,000 Nars.
This should be able to turn into minimum funding.
If one is expensive as Roxanne.

"Later today, I plan to go to Vale Town"

At breakfast, I convey my plans.
First I must go to the Slave Trader's place to ask some things.

"Is there any business you have to attend?"
"Well, there's some with the trading company"

For Roxanne, the Slave Trading Company shouldn't be a good place.

“In the trading company?”
“First, I want to go make my will. Roxanne has done very well. I’m planning on releasing Roxanne if I die.”

When a Master dies, what happens to the slave can be put in the testament.
In case there’s no special testament, it seems they follow him to the grave.

I can’t let Roxanne go through that.
It’s useful against slaves baring their fangs against their masters, but it shouldn’t be needed for Roxanne.

“Thank you very much. However, is it alright to talk about such a thing?”
“Well. I wonder if Roxanne needs to be present when making a will. You’ll end up knowing, so there’s no problem. If Roxanne isn’t needed to be present when making a will, because it can be altered secretly, even if I told you, your attitude wouldn’t change. That’s why I think there’s no problem even if I talk about it.”

I don’t know if Roxanne needs to be present when making the will; it’s better if I bring her today.

“I see, that’s so. Of course, my attitude wouldn’t change.”
“I understand. That’s as a general consideration.”

Actually, I haven’t hypothesized that Roxanne would back stab me.
Or should I say satisfied with being stabbed?

“For a testament, I think a slave doesn’t need to be present.”
“Is that so?”
“Yes. And also…”

Roxanne lowers her voice.

“Umm?”
“If you can trust me, please do not leave a will.”

Abruptly, Roxanne says something.
What do you mean?
I mostly didn’t understand the meaning.
That I don’t leave a will.

“Eh? Why?”
“I will protect Master. I will not let Master be defeated before me.”

Roxanne decisively declares it.
I stop biting the grilled rabbit meat schema and stare at Roxanne.
She isn’t showing a face like she was telling a joke.
It appears that she’s serious.

“W-well. But of course I’m relying on Roxanne.”
“If I survive without being able to protect my Master, it’s a disgrace to a warrior.”
“I understand, but the testament is another matter.”
“If you can let this slave protect you till its last breath, that’s a sign of trust in that said reliance.”

Is that kind of thing?
But the reason I feel is a bit strange.

“Well, I think I’m happy about it, but there could be a heart attack too.”
“Haart Attack?”
“It is a heart illness. I can’t deny that one can die suddenly.”

Seems like she doesn’t know what a heart attack is.

“It is alright. There is no need for Master to become worried.”
“Ermm… seriously?”
“Yes.”

Seems like it’s really written.
Looking at Roxanne’s face, one can’t think it’s a joke.
Is this what it feels like when a Knight pledges to his Lord?
In terms of the state of cultural development, that’s probably the closest thing.

“If Roxanne wants to do that, do so, but…”
“Thank you.”
“But why?”
“I think Master is a magnificent person. Young and strong and with abilities. With all due respect, you will accomplish splendid things. Nevertheless you treat me affectionately. This kindness, I must pay it back.”

Is this like a Feudal Lord and his loyal Samurai in Japan's Edo Period after all?
As for Roxanne, probably she's yearning for something like that.
In that case, isn't that a bad thing if I accept it?

"I understand. However, I must say something. I don't think I'll accomplish anything."
"I do not think so."
"Rather, I'm here because I won't achieve anything."

I, who is not a human of this world, if I move recklessly, I could possibly create chaos.
I must avoid that.
I must be cautious from overestimating my abilities and being caught in the moment commit an imprudent action.

Like the fire that is isolated will not spread and disappear, I ought to disappear like the fire that doesn't spread.

"I do not understand it well."
"It's ok if you don't understand. Just keep thinking that way."
"Certainly."

I forcefully make Roxanne agree while she is tilting her head confused.

"But I'll still go to the trading company in Vale. It's time we think about increasing the party members. I wanted to ask if there is any good warrior. There's no need to force Roxanne to come if I don't need to leave a will. In the 8th floor, 4 monsters are the biggest group that appears. As expected, it should be difficult with two members. Since I need to constantly take in and out my sword, I won't be able to constantly cope with it. If there's someone else beside Roxanne at the front, it'll be safer."

The atmosphere turns sensitive, but I talk about the original purpose.
I felt awkward after what Roxanne said about a will not being needed, but…
Because of feeling guilty, it looks like suddenly I become talkative.

No. it's not that the next party member has necessarily been decided to be a female.
If the vanguard is a dwarf that could become a Master Smith, there's the possibility that it could be a bearded old man.

Being flanked by two beauties with Roxanne or so. However, that's of course what I yearn.
When waking up in the morning with beautiful girls on each arm.
In the bath being washed from the front and back with Roxanne.
Damn. That's nice.

However, it's not like I have prepared plenty of funds.
A slave with Roxanne's level of requirements would be expensive.
Beautiful with good personality and regarding the labyrinth being very useful.
I shouldn't compromise with the party members, but there's no helping it if the next one is an old man.

"That is excellent. Certainly, if we both go up, it should be about time it got more difficult for us."

Roxanne appears to be positive too.

It's ok to try to think about it.
We don't know what could happen inside a labyrinth.
We could fall in a situation where we need to sacrifice someone to prevent the party from being wiped out.

At that time, having an old man would be useful.
If there is an old man, it's virtually been decided whom to sacrifice.
Without a moment's delay, I can make a decision.
Roxanne and I may be able to escape in those moments.

Thanks, old man. I'm indebted to you, old man.
I won't forget the old man's noble spirit.
I'll keep living thanks to the old man's sacrifice.
No more old man!

"You think likewise?"
"Yes. About that, is it alright if I accompany you there?
"Just in case, I'll try to ask Roxanne for your opinion. Because I don't know or understand a lot of things, it should be helpful if you have any advice."

I want to see what Roxanne's reaction is if I decide to choose a female.
If she looks to be against it, there's no way it can be forced.

“Understood. Well then, let’s go together.”
“Please.”

But if I think that an old man will be in the same party with Roxanne, for some reason, I could get excessively annoyed.
If he does something like staring at her chest, he’ll be punished with instant death.
The old man is forbidden from looking at Roxanne; he’s forbidden from talking to her; he’s even forbidden from breathing the same air as Roxanne.
Such rules must be necessary.
There’s the possibility that Roxanne’s glamorous figure in a negligee will be seen if we all live together.
As expected, an old man is no good. No more old man!
I must limit party members to girls.

Chapter 46 - Re-visiting.

After exploring Vale's Labyrinth, we went out to Vale's Adventurers guild.
We entered the Labyrinth to stockpile some items.

Since the 30% bonus to sale price is effective in the guild, a yellow crystal worth 100,000 nars will sell for 130,000 nars.
An increase of 30,000 nars is quite a bit, so I'm worried the guild staff may have doubts.
They might be able to notice easily because the number of gold coins will be 13.
To try and decrease suspicion, it might be a good idea to sell off a large quantity of items at the same time.

I also need to think about the place I'm selling to.
Since I'm selling a magic crystal for the first time there isn't a problem, but if I bring the next one here they might be suspicious about the speed I made it.
With the 32X increase to magic crystallization skill, I can collect magic 32X faster than everyone else.
It would be better to sell it in the confusion of a busy place.

"Can I sell the magic crystal in the Adventurers guild?"
"Yes, I think that it is possible in any guild."

Roxanne confirmed it.
If I can sell it in the Adventurers Guild, then I can sell the crystals off in another four places. Both the Adventurers guild and Explorers guild in the Imperial capital and Quratar.
With this I can rotate around the additional four places.
If I mix in some other towns as well it will be perfect.

The yellow crystal was put on the tray at the counter of Vale's Adventurers guild.
Other items are put on top of it to hide it.

"I'd like to sell these."
"Sure."

The 30ish year old woman accepted the tray, and went to the inner guild area.
Waiting was nerve wracking.

She came back. Was that about the same time as usual? Was it longer than usual?
I quickly counted that there were thirteen gold coins on the tray.
The woman does not look like she has any suspicions.
It seems it's all fine.

I quickly put the gold coins into the item box.
The silver and copper coins I put into the drawstring bag, and left the counter.

"Let's go."
"Yes."

Basically, the staff at the counter don't seem to comment about the amount of money in the sale.
Since it's an income source for the Adventurers & Explorers guilds they probably don't think anything of it.
If it's scrutinized they can get to know one's living standards and other things.
Without touching the subject, they could practically already have a grasp of it.

I went out and had my first walk through Vale in a long time.
There doesn't really seem to be any changes.

"I want to meet the Slave Trader."

We arrived in front of the Slave Traders business, and spoke to the man who came out.
I can't remember the slave traders name.

"This way please."

The man went inside once, and then came back and guided us in.
We were taken to the back room.

Why is that?
I was taken to the room I first saw when I came to sell the village thief who became a slave.
Does it seem like I came here to sell Roxanne?

I glanced towards Roxanne, but I can't see any changes in her expression.
It seems she feels safe even in the slave traders building she was in previously.
I sat down, but Roxanne remained standing.

Why?
At this time it's better if you don't sit next to me?

"You're standing?"
"Yes, I think it gives a better impression."

Roxanne's judgement is probably better than mine, I don't have a clue.
I nodded towards her and left her as is.

"Welcome Michio."

The slave trader came straight into the room.
I checked his name with [Analyze].
That's it. It's Alan.

"Sorry to have turned up so suddenly Alan."
"Don't worry about it. Please come any time you like."

I stood to greet him, and then he gestured for me to sit down.
An employee brings out two herbal tea's, and places one in front of me and the other in front of the slave trader.
There doesn't seem to be any for Roxanne.
Is that because they think I came to sell her, or just because they know she's a slave?

"Roxanne has been doing quite well, you've sold me a great warrior and you have my gratitude."

For a start, I clarify that I did not come here to sell.
It'll be troublesome if there's some awkward interaction or atmosphere.

“Thank you for your kind words.”
“Your recommendation was spot on.”
“There’s no problems?”
“None.”

Since the person we are talking about is here, I wouldn’t want to say anything bad anyway.
The slave trader probably understands that.

“That’s great.”
“Since Roxanne has worked out so well, I’ll be thinking about another party member soon.”
“I understand.”
“I was wondering, is it possible to purchase a Master Smith?”

It might be an issue that I’ve exposed my intentions, but it can’t be helped.
I had to ask.
It won’t be possible for me to find out without talking.

“You want a Master Smith?”
“That’s right.”
“Well… it isn’t impossible… but it’s quite… difficult.”

The slave trader answered me while thinking.
It might be difficult since it’s for a specific job.

“I understand.”
“Are you aware that the fusion of monster cards is often a failure?”
“I know.”

“That won’t change, even if the Master Smith is a slave. If it keeps failing, eventually the owner will start suspecting the slave. Even so, there are quite a lot of people such as nobles who want a Master Smith but none of those stories ever end with both of them being happy.”

So there are problems even when working with them directly?
You never know if the slave has stolen the monster card instead.
Well, I can understand the anger if failures continue to happen.

“I see.”
“Dwarves understand this, so before they become a slave they will often change their job to something other than a Master Smith.”
“So there are no slaves that are Master Smiths?”
“Well, it isn’t that there are none, they do exist, but that also makes the price go up.”

So the price goes up because they are rare.
I would be angry as well if I paid a lot and failures kept happening.
It feels like the negatives just keep coming.

They have a bad reputation, so the amount of them decreases.
Since there isn’t many of them, the price goes up.
If it’s cheap they can give up easily, but people are angrier if they specially pay a high price and they don’t succeed.
They vent their anger at the Master Smith slave, the bad reputation spreads, and the amount of Master Smiths decreases even more.

“I don’t think you’d go that far desiring a Master Smith. How about a dwarf who isn’t a Master Smith? Might be useful as a vanguard.”

Looks like it will be hard to buy a Master Smith.
It’s still worth trying though.
I can request a Master Smith, but the chances of finding one are low.

However, since I have the [Party Job Setting] skill it doesn’t have to be that job.
If the dwarf can get the job then it will be fine.

“They make good vanguards because the dwarf race is quite strong.”
“I see.”

Some of this I have already heard from Roxanne.
Just enough to keep up with the conversation.
Can I buy a dwarf slave? I haven’t asked the important stuff yet.
I hesitated about if I should talk about that part with Roxanne.

Dwarves, dragon people, and beast people like Roxanne all seem to be suited to being a vanguard.
So, are humans just powerless?

“However, unfortunately we only have one dwarf here at the moment. I think based on her personality she isn’t cut out to be a fighter.”
“Oh, that’s too bad.”

He referred to her as female, but I can’t jump at just that.
Hearing it’s a female is my weakness.
I need to stay calm.

“I can write a letter to introduce you to other shops. Why not try some to see if they have a good dwarf?”
“You don’t mind if I do that?”
“It’s fine.”
“Even though it’s your competition?”

Don’t you want a customer like me?
Is it because I get things cheaply?
Because of my 30% discount?

“This business doesn’t really lack in customers coming to purchase. What I need is people coming here to sell. We also have our own routes to get stock, all of the Vale region and the southern plains are our trading area. Shops stocked in different regions aren’t really competitors and we help each other out when it’s needed.”
“So that’s how it is.”

Those in this line of work have their own circumstances.

“I’ll introduce you to a business I’m close to in the Imperial Capital, though at the current time they may be low on stock as well.”
“Oh?”
“Spring is the farming season.”

So there’s a high demand at the moment and it’s busy?
Nobody would put up a proper worker for sale while they are busy.
When the farming work is done, then the supply will go up.

Even for the farmers, it’s not good to buy in a hurry when you’re already busy.
It’s necessary to prepare the slaves beforehand.
If they aren’t at least that skilled, then getting slaves would be hard.

“Ah, I see.”

I worked it out myself and came to my own understanding.
It doesn’t matter if I’m wrong.
It doesn’t change the fact that the market price is high at the moment because supply is a problem, compared to when business is slow and the price gets cheaper.

“There’s a good shop doing business in the Imperial Capital that I’ll introduce you to. I think you might be able to find something nice there.”
“That would be good.”
“Even if they don’t have a dwarf, they might still have a good person who can serve as a vanguard.”
“Yes, I’ll take a look.”

I made my request without saying anything odd.
It was well done.
Since this is a business for the slave trader, I would have thought he’d try to convince me to buy something.

“Since you’ve let me know what you’re looking for I can hold onto one for you if I see one.”
“I’d appreciate that.”

When I was introduced to Roxanne, I mainly saw female slaves.
They didn’t show off any talented men.

“They’ll end up mostly males though.”
“I understand.”

There might be no helping it.
Should the forward be an old dude?
Any dwarf would be good, but there’s always the chance to refuse.

“Thank you.”
“Oh? I’d still like to see your dwarf as well.”

After saying that I feel I made a mistake.
I drew attention to the fact I was interested in the female dwarf.

“She just came recently.”
“I see.”
“Even though I say that, her memory is good and she has already learned the Brahim language, but the rest of her education is lacking.”

The slave trader seems slightly flustered.
His response was a bit hurried.
I see. Since he said she hasn’t been fully educated yet, is that a weak point?
I’m not worried since I was able to find out what the quality is like.

Roxanne seems to have learned the Brahim language and manners here too.
A slave who doesn’t learn it is not good.

The slave trader said what he needed to, and then left to prepare.
I let Roxanne sit down, and passed her the herbal tea since I hadn’t touched it.
When I came to pick up Roxanne I thought they might have drugged my drink, but I don’t have that worry anymore.

Judging from the results, the slave traders recommendation was spot on.
He feels like a merchant that can be trusted.

“Do you have any requests for the vanguard?”
“I think that it will be fine if they are to Master’s liking.”

I’m slightly embarrassed as I think about what I like.
After speaking with Roxanne about a variety of things, the slave trader returns.

“I’ll show you the male candidates first. Sorry, but she will have to wait here since the area is for men only.”
“Ok, I understand how things could get if a beautiful woman like Roxanne comes in.”
“….w-well.”
“Roxanne, please wait here.”
“I will.”

The stimulation might be too large if I bring her in front of the male slaves.
They were dropped to the position of slave and then kept locked away in the slave traders establishment. If that happened to me and then a beautiful woman like Roxanne showed up I’d cause a rebellion.

The slave trader guides me to the second floor.
We enter the room.

….Oh.

It's like a classroom here.

Reflexively everyone has a questioning expression.
Some will definitely be suitable for a vanguard.

Scary.
It might be impossible.
Ordering around guys like these would be too difficult.

It feels like I'm being attacked by their glares.
Is it alright to be in here? There won't be a revolt?
I'm glad I didn't bring Roxanne along, though it may have been necessary for a guard.

If they jump at me and I'm quick I can draw the copper sword at my waist.
I'm glad I left it there.
I'm in the castle. [TL Note: 殿中でござる (Denchuu de gozaru = I'm in the castle.) is a reference to historical plays, specifically the 47 ronins. That in the castle there are rules that must be followed, among them drawing weapons is forbidden, so it's a safe place. If broken the culprit must commit suicide, specifically it alludes to where Feudal Lord Asano Naganori assaulted a court official that enrage him by drawing a dagger, because of that Asano was compelled to commit suicide and that brought his 47 samurais to avenge their masters
honor http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forty-seven_Ronin.%5D
Don't lose my mind. I'm in the castle.
After examining them I will escape quickly.
Even though I've felt the pressure of being interviewed, it's the first time I've felt that pressure as an examiner.
If I was threatened with "buy me" then I would start nodding unintentionally.

Some of them aren't candidates, some of them are the shops guards though that doesn't cause me to be more comfortable.
I feel like a detective that's just been surrounded by gangsters.

I've underestimated the experience of owning a slave.
If I had a slave like these I might have problems within just a few days.
Even the person who owns slaves needs talent.

"How are they?"

The slave trader asks me after we leave the room.
I'd like to say they are all shit.

It's impossible.
It's really impossible.
It's definitely impossible.

"I don't think I have enough talent to handle them."

This is truthful more than just being humble.

"If there are any you'd like to speak to on their own, let me know."

He wasn't deterred.
He seems like a person of ability, and isn't worried about anything.

There might have been someone there who looked decent and was worth checking out.
However, in a room full of gangsters lined up it's impossible to pick out one that doesn't seem scary from the crowd.
Even if there is one that isn't scary, there's still problems as a vanguard.
If I picked one that looked fine in front of me, he might also be rebellious.

Should I ignore a useful vanguard?
The road ahead seems rocky.

Chapter 47 - Sherry

“What did you think?”

I, who returned alive after the fearsome classroom was met by Roxanne.
She looks like a goddess.
No. She IS a goddess.
Roxanne is a goddess.

The beautiful, gentle woman. with a soothing voice, who is reliable in a Labyrinth, with pretty dog ears, and big breasts.

“Roxanne, Thank you.”
“Um… yes?”
“It seems that many things are difficult.”

Roxanne doesn’t seem to understand, but that’s fine.
She only needs to know that we won’t be getting a male slave.

After briefly stroking her dog ears I sit on the couch and sip some tea.

“Oh…”
“Huh? Did anyone apart from Roxanne drink from this?”
“No.”
“It’s fine then.”

Drinking after Roxanne isn’t a problem.

The slave trader also returns shortly.

“That might be the extent of the people who are able to handle the Labyrinth at the moment.”
“Really? What kind of prices are they I’m wondering?”
“For people who can handle the Labyrinth, 150,000 nars is the cheapest, but men are mostly 250,000 nars and up.”
“Oh.”

So that’s what the market price is like?
Beauty is more valuable than being able to work in the Labyrinth?

Well, the price of a labor slave is probably based on how much it can earn, whereas a woman has other values.

A knocking sound is heard at the door.

“Enter”
“Preparations are complete.”

The door opens, and the woman who seems to be an employee peers in.
After bowing to the slave dealer, she notices Roxanne and gives a slight nod.

Roxanne also nods.
She seems to be an acquaintance.
Since she belonged to this business it’s natural to know some people.

“Bring her.”
“Ok.”

After the slave dealers order, the woman brings a girl into the room.
It’s a short girl that only reaches to the chest of the woman.
Small.
Her height is under 140cm.

Sherry: 16 year old female, explorer Lv10.

[Analyze] shows she’s 16 years old, the same age as Roxanne.
She’s small because she’s a dwarf?

Even if she’s a dwarf, she doesn’t really look like one.
She has more of a short, still growing sort of feeling.
It’s the sort of appearance that if I’ve seen a dwarf before I would not have noticed.

Her body is fine, and not overweight at all.
She’s small, thin, and lovely.
I don’t really know what dwarf standards are like, and if she’s a regular height.

Still, this isn't a child's body, it's just small.
Her body isn't an hourglass figure, but I think it's fine.
Her hair is black and she gives of an obedient impression.

Even with her black hair she has a bright looking face.
A slightly raised nose with big powerful eyes and a small mouth.
She looks slightly Italian.
If I call her a Japanese person who looks Italian would that describe her?

TN: I realize her hair isn't black in the picture, probably a difference between the WN & the LN.

She is a considerably beautiful girl.
Instead of calling her a beautiful woman, beautiful girl fits better.
If she styled her hair she could pass as a celebrity.

Her hair is thick and gives a slightly strange impression.
It is short, and curls at the shoulders on the right and left side.

“Nice to meet you.”

When bowing, her entire hair has an unnatural shake.
What happened?

“Sherry is the only dwarf here at the moment. Sherry, come here.”
“Ok.”

Sherry goes over and sits next to the slave dealer, on the couch in front of me.
She is a dwarf.

She is a beautiful girl, even from up close.
There isn’t the heart racing feeling I had when I saw Roxanne for the first time though.
Why?

Maybe I don’t feel the desire since I already have Roxanne?
I already have Roxanne, so I don’t need to get worked up.
It’s because I have Roxanne.
Even if I don’t get this one, I still have Roxanne.

Crap, is that how it is?
This is what the difference in society is like?
The popular guy who doesn’t immediately jump on a woman becomes more popular?
An unpopular guy won’t become more popular if his ulterior motives are exposed.

The present me can calmly look at her.
Sherry, even though she doesn’t have a woman’s charm, is a beautiful girl.
It’s wrong to look for seductuous charm, being cute is fine.

After seeing the horrors on the third floor, her feeling of obedience gives a good impression.

“Are you fine with going into the Labyrinth?”
“Yes. When it’s possible I’ll do it.”
“I see.”

I asked about it.
She’s not worried about fighting in the Labyrinth.
Since she’s already Lv10 it’s probably safe.
Though, Sherry’s arm on the table is quite thin and small.

Why doesn’t the slave trader say anything?
He’s quietly watching things play out.

“Um, that….”

Sherry hesitated to say something.
Sherry looks at the the slave trader.
The slave trader gives a small nod.

“Yes?”
“I’m an explorer Lv10.”
“You have no problems entering the Labyrinth as an explorer?”

I already knew that from [Analyze].

“Um, well…”
“There’s a problem?”
“Until a dwarf becomes an explorer Lv10, they have the chance to become a master smith. However, not all dwarves can become one. Generally only those who have a talent in the Labyrinth can become one.”

There seems to be a problem.

“In other words, you weren’t able to become one?”
“…yes.”

At my question, Sherry looks down.

If it is a dwarf who has talent then it's possible to become a master smith at explorer Lv10.
Sherry is explorer Lv10 and not a master smith yet.
So it wasn't possible for her to become one by explorer Lv10.
To get to that level and not be a master smith means that she doesn't have talent in the Labyrinth.

Sherry can't become a master smith.
Having a dwarf as a vanguard isn't a problem, but I did want a master smith.

However, there might be no chance.
To become a master smith you need talent?
There's already the limitation of being a dwarf.
Is there no hope?

First, how is it that talent is measured?
There is a condition aside from explorer Lv10 to get the master smith job.
For example, maybe higher than 100 Intellect is required.
No, Sherry seems to be quite smart, I need to consider something a dwarf needs.
Then, maybe it's 100 strength or more.

Since my bonus points in my character reset skill can be placed into strength, the condition of it being 100 or more is possible.
The conditions could be having 100 strength or more before explorer Lv10.
Roxanne has never mentioned stat points, so the knowledge of stat points doesn't seem to exist.
So a dwarf who doesn't reach the required strength by explorer Lv10 will think that it's just because they don't have the talent in the Labyrinth.

"Can I ask a question?"
"Yes. Please do."

Sherry looks up.
Her face is cute.
It would be a shame to decline her just because she doesn't have the master smith job.

Will her impression of me be hurt if I say something bad?
Her hair looks a little rough.
Perhaps it's because Roxanne is too beautiful.

How was Roxanne when I first met her?
With Roxanne we wipe our bodies every day before going to sleep, and have used the bath several times, and even with soap yesterday.
Of course there would be a difference.

If Roxanne became more beautiful, Sherry is sure to become more beautiful as well.
Because the base material is quite good.

“If you don’t become a master smith by explorer Lv10, is it impossible? I’m wondering if there are other conditions to becoming one.”

I wouldn’t be sad if I found out there was a condition that isn’t talent.

“Only job changes before explorer Lv10 are accepted in the master smiths guild, though exceptions aren’t entirely unheard of.”
“Is that so?”

Really? Is that how it goes?”
If you are talented you can become a master smith by explorer Lv10, but the possibility of becoming one after that is interesting.

Well, over explorer Lv10 and over 100 strength might be too common.
Then everyone could become a master smith.
The conditions might be more severe.
Even if Sherry doesn’t have the master smith job at the moment, if we meet the requirements the job should be able to be obtained.

Of course, there is always the possibility that the job can’t be obtained as well.
How should I estimate the chances?

It also seems difficult to buy a master smith slave.
Though it seems you can buy a former master smith, you can’t distinguish one with [Analyze] so they could just pretend to be a former master smith.
If you request a master smith, there will be some risks.

Even if she doesn’t obtain master smith after buying her, I do still have room for more party members.
At worst, she’s just someone to stay at home and mind the house while we

go to the Labyrinth.
The chance that Sherry can become a master smith might mean it's worth taking the risk.

If the master smith job requires 100 strength before explorer Lv10, then it isn't a job we can get later no matter how much strength is increased.
Like this, if you say it's talent by explorer Lv10, then it isn't altogether wrong.

Sherry is explorer Lv10 now.
It's a disadvantage.

"I was one of the strongest people in my village and I can show that in the Labyrinth. Thank you in advance."

Sherry bows.
Strength of 100 doesn't seem to be the condition.

Why is she promoting herself to me?
Is it from the slave traders orders?
I'm suspicious of it.

"Is that enough?"

Was the slave trader reading my reaction?
Is there doubt in my expression?

"Yes."
"Ok."

When I nod, the slave trader has Sherry withdrawn.
The slave trader also left the room with them.

"Would it be alright?"

Since the two of them have left, I mutter my doubts.
The other female slaves that I saw when I first met Roxanne behaved poorly.
Even the male slaves I just met behaved like that despite my presence, so I'm not really interested in purchasing them.

If I was a slave I don't think I'd consider trying to promote myself.
Therefore, these are the slaves natural attitudes.
But why did she appeal to me?

"I think that her condition is good."
"What condition? Ability to enter the Labyrinth?"

With my ability in the Labyrinth, I didn't really consider asking about it in detail.
The Labyrinth is the only way I know for her to earn her keep.
Well, she could hunt thieves as well if I ordered it.
I should also consider the increasing risk in the Labyrinth as we advance further.

"Well, she spoke about the Labyrinth to promote herself, I was also like that."

Is that how it was?
There might have been that aspect.
Being able to recognize skilled people is like killing two birds with one stone.

"So, you think the dwarf is promising?"

After asking, I realized it.
The reason the slave trader left is so that I can consult Roxanne about it.
That's probably how it is.
Well, I don't mind that.

"Yes, even if she doesn't know much yet or have talent, she has the resolution needed for training and effort."
"Yes, that's true."

Roxanne's training would be scary.
I won't object to it though.
It would give me some peace of mind.
Well, it might only be me thinking of something severe.

"She might not last long, but if the price is low she isn't a bad choice."
"She might not last long?"

“She might already be quite old, so you may want to check her age.”
“Oh?”

[Analyze] showed Sherry to be 16 years old.
It is the same age as Roxanne.
What is Roxanne saying?
Do dwarves have a short life span?

“As a dwarf gets older, their ears become thinner, and her ears were considerably thin.”

Roxanne explains this as I look doubtful.
Is it really like that?

The slave trader once told me that different races show their ages differently.
Is the dwarves aging point their ears?
The slave trader also said that there isn’t much difference in life span for different races.

“Ah, I see.”

It might be important to notice if someone is elderly.
I’ve heard something good.

The slave trader returns to the heavy atmosphere.
Didn’t he attempt to eaves drop?
The woman who brought Sherry is also with him.

“May I speak to that woman for a bit? I am indebted to her because she looked after me when I was here.”

Roxanne lets me know, when she sees the woman.

“Sure, that’s fine.”

The slave trader enters the room and Roxanne leaves.
The slave trader sits down in front of me.

“What did you think.”
“Depending on the price, she might be alright.”
“I see. Sherry is 16 years old, and even though she isn’t a master smith, she has agreed to become a sex slave. She’s a virgin so there is no worry about disease as well.”

The slave trader starts speaking frankly, probably because Roxanne left.
Did he intend for Roxanne to leave for this?
It’s not just me thinking about devious things.

“Is that so?”
“I don’t think you know much about other races Michio? Sherry’s ears are naturally thin, and that’s generally a feature of an aging dwarf. That decreases the price a bit and I think makes her quite affordable.”

It seems he probably did hear the conversation between myself and Roxanne.
If not he probably would have tried to sell her off at a high price.
I am glad that she came along.

“Even though people from other races would consider her ears to be an unrelated matter, she’s still cheap?”
“Actually, for other races a dwarves ears are the only thing they can judge their age by.”
“I see.”

Ah, for a woman that everybody thinks is elderly, society won’t value her at a high price.

“Also, because Sherry is only a first year slave, the amount of tax is cheaper too.”
“A first year slave?”

A regular persons taxes are 30,000 nars, and a slaves taxes are 10,000 nars.
If I became a slave I could pay 10,000 nars tax and then buy myself back and evade 20,000 nars of tax.
To prevent that, only a first year slave pays 10,000 nars in tax, and after that they are 30,000 nars.

Though I’m a freeman and my taxes are 100,000 nars so it would still be a saving of 70,000 nars after the first year.

However, I might not be set back to freeman after buying myself back.
That's likely I think.

What about Roxanne's tax?
Roxanne was sold because her family was unable to pay their taxes. Did the slave trader have to pay 30,000, or 10,000 because she had just been sold?
That may have altered Roxanne's price.

"I understand."
"Yeah, so because of her ears her price isn't that high, just around 300,000 nars, but her education isn't finished either so I'll decrease it by another 30,000 nars. How does 270,000 nars sound?"

The slave trader presents a price.
It's a massive difference compared to Roxanne's.
It's still higher than a male slave though, because it's a young woman?
Well, it's probably still cheaper than the regular market price.

Roxanne's age may have been an unfair advantage.
This time that isn't happening.
If it's cheap, I'll buy it, those were my conditions.

"Hmmmm…."
"Well… 260,000, no 250,000… that's the best I can do."

As I think about it, he cuts the price.
The slave trader really wants to push to sell?
Is it because I don't care about the ears?

"Um?"
"Yes?"

250,000 nars seems to be the lowest.
It won't go any lower?
There's no helping it.

"When I bought Roxanne, she had some cloths included."
"Those? They were imitation maid cloths, and they really pleased a lot of customers."

Maid's wear maid cloths.
They are obviously for women who do housework in upper class houses.

"Is there any?"
"If I add cloths it's an additional 4,000 nars, and if I add that on and consider this a special service the price comes to 177,800 nars."

Since I bought something extra, the 30% discount became effective.
This completes the deal.

Chapter 48 - Cutie

I took out 14 gold coins, and 378 silver coins and paid for Sherry.
I don't have much money left now.
100 silver coins equals a gold coin, but it's necessary to pay the price.
A gold coin is 10,000 nars, and quite expensive.

I count out the money and the slave trader leaves. Roxanne comes back instead.

"I've decided to take her."
"Really? That's good then."

For a brief moment Roxanne's expression becomes cloudy.
Did I notice because I'm feeling guilty?
Or am I hoping she's jealous?

Even though Roxanne's expression seems to darken, on the surface she is welcoming it.

It's because of Roxanne I had this chance.

Does she think she can't object because she's a slave?
I don't think I'd mind if she showed her displeasure a bit.
To enter the Labyrinth we need to increase our war potential.
Would it be fine if I bought a man? Well, that would cause other problems.

"I'll still be relying on you in the future Roxanne."
"Yes Master. Please do."

Roxanne replied with a smile.
Maybe I shouldn't have bought Sherry.
Well, I've paid a lot of money and it's done now.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting. Come here Sherry."

After leaving with the money, the slave trader returned to the room.
Sherry is right behind him.
Sherry bows.

“Please look after me.”
“I’ll be in your care.”
“I am the number one slave Roxanne. Please look after me.”

Roxanne seems to have reached the rank of number one slave.
It’s true that I bought her first though.

Does this need to be said?
The number one slave? The top seat?
I don’t know.

“You were a slave after all? I thought you were his young wife.”

Sherry is surprised at Roxanne’s remark.

“Young wife. That isn’t the case.”

Roxanne. I didn’t want you to deny that so flatly.

“I was mistaken because your cloths are so nice, you look very health, and your skin has such a lovely complexion.”
“It’s because Master is a gentle, wonderful person. You won’t have to worry about food, clothing or shelter.”

While the two slaves are talking, I lift my left hand.
Sherry also lifts her left hand.
The slave trader recites an incantation and the intelligence cards appear.

“The contract is completed. Please confirm her age.”

Confirm that she’s young even though she has thin ears.
Since there is an intelligence card the age can’t be falsified?
Perhaps there are methods somehow.

Sherry. 16 year old female. Explorer. First year slave. Owner: Kaga Michio.

I already knew she was 16 because of [Analyze].
Sherry’s ears really are thin, but that doesn’t worry me.
It’s convenient because she was cheap thanks to those ears.

Kaga Michio. 17 year old male. Explorer. Freeman. Owner of slaves: Roxanne, Sherry.

The number of slaves owned has increased on my intelligence card.
Is there a limit to the amount of slaves I can own? Wouldn't there be a problem displaying it if the number of slaves keeps increasing?

"I've confirmed it."
"It takes time to have the cloths made. Please come and pick them up in 10 days."

The same with Roxanne, we received more details afterwards.
A receipt was completed, and we left the business.
Once outside, Sherry was invited to the party, and [Plating] was cast.

Explorer Lv10, Villager Lv3, Herbalist Lv1.

Even though I could see her jobs because of [Party Job Settings], master smith was not there.
There isn't many jobs, is it because she's still Villager Lv3?
Warrior, Swordsman & Merchant become available at Lv5. Perhaps master smith is at Lv5 too?
It's admirable that she doesn't have thief.

Sherry doesn't have anything except the tunic and pants she is wearing.
Roxanne just had a case of clothing as well.

"I'll stop by the explorers guild."
"Certainly."
"C-Certainly."

On the way back we stopped at Vale's explorers guild and bought one black magic crystal.
We bought one this morning in Quratar's explorers guild as a replacement for the yellow one we sold.
Now that I have another slave I needed an extra though.

I have not found any black crystals in the labyrinth since the one I tested fusing on.

It feels like I wasted it.
My judgement is bad at times.

“After that we’ll go to the adventurer’s guild, and then should we return straight to the house?”
“Certainly.”
“Um, yes?”

Sherry seemed a bit hesitant, but walked up right next to me.

“Is something wrong?”
“Um, is there also an adventurer that is a party member?”
“No, why do you ask?”
“Because of the way you said we’d return to the house.”

Then Sherry went back and chatted to Roxanne.
There’s the possibility of getting home from the wall in the adventurer’s guild using the adventurers skill [Field walk].
Since Sherry has seen my intelligence card she knows I’m an explorer.
Did she think there was something strange?

“Don’t worry, you’ll understand soon enough.”

Oh. Roxanne stopped trying to explain it.
I’m uncomfortable about the explanation.
Is it because it’s a secret?

“What? Oh, um?…”

As expected, when [Warp] is used from the adventurers guild to get home Sherry gives a puzzled look.

“Lets sit down. I’m going shopping for some things we’ll need.”

I decided not to explain it.
I sit on the dining room chair.

“It’s not that late yet.”
“I think I’ll go to the effort of preparing the bath today.”
“Yes, that’s wonderful.”

Roxanne had sat down in the next seat, and her whole face lit up.
Roxanne seems to like the bath too.
Her dog ears are more beautiful when she's smiling.
I pat them without thinking.

"Um. Is it possible that you have multiple jobs? I've only heard stories about that from Myths and Legends."

Sherry interrupts.
Such a legend exists?

I've heard something nice.
If I had the adventurers job I could use [Field walk] while still showing as explorer on my intelligence card.
She has a good head on her shoulders to work it out from that.

"Sadly I don't have the adventurers job. That was a magic called [Warp]."
"Is that time & space magic?"
"Time & space magic?"

I return the question like a parrot.
Is there space magic?

"Well, not many know it but when [Field walk] is used it doesn't just effect the location but time as well, so it's actually a time and space magic."
"There's a time difference?"
"The time difference, sometimes you move to a location that is night time when the starting location was daytime. If I leave in early morning, sometimes I'll end up somewhere that is still night. [Field walk] is a magic that effects time like this."

Well, it is a time difference.
Is it the sort of thing that you'll notice if you travel to the same places often, but you won't understand?

"Sit down for now."
"It's fine to sit?"

Roxanne who is next to me at the six person table speaks to Sherry in a quiet voice.

I chose the six person table because a party has a maximum size of six people.

“Yes, please sit next to Master.”

The chairs are in groups of three, and I’m in the central chair.
A beautiful woman is sitting on either side of me. A flower in each hand.
Roxanne understands things well.

“Well, thank you then.”
“This planet. Do you know the theory of a round earth?”

I asked.
It would explain the difference in time from one area to the next.
The circular earth theory has been around for a considerably long time on earth.
The positions of the stars move as well if you travel north.

Time and space magic. Sherry might be smart.
For such a person it might be necessary to show off how smart the master is as well.
If I properly explain the time difference caused by the circular planet with the angle of the sun then I might get respected a bit.

It would be a good feeling to be respected by a cute girl like Sherry.
Also, it might be useful for smoothly progressing our life here.
Even though it’s not something I discovered, it’s from the scientists of earths past.
I wish to express my thanks to the effort of my ancestors.

“I have heard the story that there was a great old scholar who insisted it was so, but the people who made the story called him a useless fool.”
“What is the basis for it being a silly theory?”
“If the earth was round, a person on the other side would fall off.”

Well.
So that’s how it is.
I guess they’d think that, if they didn’t know about gravity.

“Well, I don’t think it’s a time and space magic, but I have some magics that I use that you must keep a secret.”
“I will.”

Lets give up on explaining.
I don’t know how to properly explain gravity.
Although I brought it up with the intention of showing off my knowledge I think I’d just end up sounding foolish.
It seems that I need to keep up constant effort.
“So there is legends of people with multiple jobs?”
“There are legends such people existed in the past.”
“Well, you can think of me like that.”
“Um…?”
“So, for today what do I need to buy, a rucksack, a wooden bucket, some equipment?

I forcibly stopped the explanation and switched to speaking with Roxanne.
Roxanne seemed surprised at my remarks, but doesn’t falter.
She’s used to surprises from me by now.

“Well, for today and tomorrow the cloths provided by the slave traders business are enough, but please buy new underwear.”
“I understand, I’ll visit a clothing store.”
“Yes.”

There’s a good clothing store on the other side of Quratar’s labyrinth that I can go to.

“Um. Mine aren’t dirty yet so you don’t need to trouble yourself.”
“I’m buying them. Also, what would you like for a weapon?”

Well, she’ll need some underwear to wear tomorrow.

“Ah. Thank you. I can use a hammer if I’m a vanguard, or a spear if I’m in mid range. I’m good with a spear but a spear can’t be used by a vanguard. The hammer is better to avoid hitting allies because it’s powerful and easy to use.”

Since the spear is long it may be difficult to use in the narrow labyrinth.

“For the spear, do you use it from behind?”
“Yes, or thrusting it into the demon between the vanguards. It’s slow to use but the power is quite strong.”

It doesn’t seem like a bad idea to use the spear as well.
However, the current situation will require her to be a vanguard.

“In Master’s party, Master annihilates the enemy with his magic while I keep the demon’s in check. It would be good for you to use a hammer and become a vanguard while Master is the fire power.”

Roxanne has the same opinion as me.

“What? Magic?”
“Yes.”
“It’s possible?”

Sherry alternately looks between Roxanne and me.

“Yes.”
“Yes.”
“Oh…”
“Keep it a secret though.”

Sherry looks confused, but I force her agreement.

“Ok. So… it really is multiple jobs?”
“Yes. Don’t worry about it. Have you defeated demons with a hammer?”

That could be the problem.
Monk was acquired from defeating demons bare handed, and swordsman might have been because I use a sword. Perhaps defeating demons with a hammer is a condition for master smith?
It really feels like a master smith should use a hammer.

“No, I have not.”
“Well, if your fine with it I’ll get you a hammer to use.”

We’ll try that out first.

“Ah, yes.”

Sherry nodded while slightly tilting her head.
Is the missing condition that she hasn’t defeated a demon with a hammer?
There is a chance it’s related.
A small chance.

“I’ll get a hammer. Do dwarves often use hammers?”
“There are people who use other weapons but it’s quite common, and I’ve used one a little.”

For a dwarf with talent, a demon is usually defeated with a hammer. It will be enough to try it.

“Has Roxanne used one?”
“No, It’s quite heavy and my speed would be reduced by it.”

Right, with a heavy hammer Roxanne’s ability to dodge would decrease.
Movement with a light sword.
Actually, the scimitar isn’t really that light.

“Do you hold the hammer with both hands?”
“Yes. Some people just use one hand, but power goes up if you use two.”

I confirmed it with Sherry.
She doesn’t need a shield.

“I don’t have much money left for equipment, so please bear with some cheap equipment for now.”
“It’s alright.”
“Also, do you know about empty slots on equipment?”

I casually asked.

“A skill slot?”
“You know about it?”
“A great old scholar had a theory that equipment has slots, and a skill won’t fuse to it from a monster card if there isn’t one.”

I asked, and there seems to be such a theory.
I've hit the nail on the head?

"Knowing the same thing as a great scholar. Master is very wise."
"Ah, yes, the theory about the round earth, and… the dwarf skill slot… even only a small number of dwarves know about it."

The old scholar was great.
If there is a person saying the same thing then the idea that a monster card will fuse with an empty slot seems to be correct.

"That theory, is it no good?"
"Nobody knows because nobody can see the skill slots."

I can see them with [Analyze].

"There's no way to check?"

Roxanne asks about it.
The theory is easy to check.
You just have to fuse monster cards with equipment many times.
If you find a piece of gear that the fusion fails on every single time then the theory is proven. After that, if you find a bit of gear that fails even once you wouldn't try it again.

Is that all?
They should be able to verify it.

"If anything, there are more people who don't believe it."
"So it's not being completely denied?"
"When fusion fails, the monster card is lost, and the equipment returns to being it's materials. Even though the piece of equipment can be re-made, the people who believe in the skill slot theory don't believe it becomes the same piece of gear."

Does the equipment break as well when it fails?
Then verifying it is impossible.
Aside from [Analyze], there is no change to the appearance if an item has a skill slot or not.
The skill slot theory still seems to be correct though.

“What do you think Sherry?”
“The skill slot theory seems a little far fetched. It blames this and that for failure, but the argument against it doesn’t hold any weight either.

So Sherry disagrees?
I understand what she’s saying though.
There’s no way to disprove it.
There’s no way to get any results.

To think of such a thing.
Sherry seems to be quite smart.

“Is that so? You seemed to know a lot about it.”
“Sorry. I was interested so I asked someone that was well informed.”

How smart and knowledgeable she is might make her useful.

Chapter 49 - Search

My newest slave, Sherry, seems to be quite smart.
She might be useful for me since I don't know anything about this world.
"I'm sorry. My mother always got angry if I didn't know something."

Sherry lowers her head.

"It's not bad."
"It's been said that if you try to learn too much you'll bring ruin upon yourself."
"Oh, really, hmm."

I understand an idea like that.
It's about "knowing your place".
Slavery is common in this world.

"Master also does experiments to learn things, so I think it's good."
"Really?"

Roxanne, you're not harbouring a grudge?
You're smiling, but you might be hiding it.

"Well, we don't over-do it."
"Yes."

Well, knowing about it isn't bad, but it could be bad if too much was said.
That it's possible to use magic, and not use the incantation.
That party members jobs can be changed.
Oh, maybe that should be explained.

"Oh, do you have anything in your item box Sherry?"
"No, nothing."

After confirming it, I changed Sherry's job to villager Lv3.
If Sherry's explorer job becomes Lv11, it might be bad.

"Hmmm, villager Lv3 is a bit low."
"What?"

Sherry looks at me with eyes of suspicion.
Did I make things awkward?

"…"

When I look at Roxanne she looks like a person who is slightly troubled.
Is that so?
Neither of them are aware of my knowledge of party job levels.

It's one of those times where I'd say something hard to understand to Roxanne.
Roxanne seems a little cold right now.

"Well, do you know anything about the hero job?"

There's no helping it, so I ask Sherry a question.

"It's a legendary job that the first emperor was supposed to have."
"There's a legend?"
"Yes. There's also people who say that such a job doesn't exist as well, and there's no guild for it either."

Hero seems to be quite rare.

"So, you'd need to find someone with that job to prove that it exists?"
"Since it was supposed to be the job of the founding emperor, if someone had that job they might be accused of rebellion."

What?

Bad. So that's how it is?
I don't want to think of that possibility.
I think it's real that the first emperor had the job.

"I see. So, I'm off to go shopping."
"Ok."

It's hard to talk about it more than this, so I decide to run away.
Roxanne has a knowing expression, so she probably realises.

“After shopping, I’ll have dinner with Sherry & Roxanne, and then I’ll prepare the bath. Can you cook anything Sherry?”
“Yes, I can cook a little.”
“Ok.”

Because Sherry said she can cook, I look to Roxanne and give a nod.
It carries a variety of meanings.

“Undestood.”
“Um, that thing, the bath, it’s THAT kind of bath?”
“I’m not sure what you can’t understand, it’s just a bath.”

Are there other kinds of baths? When I think about it, there are.
Sauna, hot spring, public bath.

“I see.”
“Sherry, just wait with Roxanne for a bit and you’ll see.”

I stand up to run away.
I leave the two alone, and leave through the wall.

“I’ve heard that only royalty and nobles take baths, Is he an amazing person?”

As I use [Warp], I hear Sherry speaking to Roxanne.

“See you later, Master.”
“See you later.”

The two of them bowed, and I’m not sure if Roxanne gave an answer.
I warped to the adventurer’s guild, and then headed to the armor shop.

In the armor shop I buy a leather jacket, a leather hat, and leather shoes.
All of them have empty skill slots.
It takes a bit of time, even if I had brought Roxanne to help.

Leather equipment is pretty cheap in price.
For the hands, we still have spare leather mittens.

I return to the house once.

“Welcome back Master.”
“Welcome back.”
“Leather shoes for Roxanne, and Roxanne you can pass the sandals to Sherry.”

I take off the Leather shoes that I’m wearing and give them to Roxanne.
I will wear the new ones I just bought.

Sherry is barefoot, like Roxanne was when I bought her.
If I had known I could have prepared shoes beforehand.

“Yes Master, Thank you.”
“Do you need a leather jacket Sherry? If not you could try the leather armor.”

I pull the leather jacket from my item box.
The leather jacket is more expensive than the leather armor, so normally I’d pass the leather armor to Sherry.

“Well, my breasts are a bit small…”

Sherry looks a bit sad.
I didn’t mean to have that kind of meaning.
This is not sexual harrassment.
This is definately not sexual harassment.

Sherry’s breasts aren’t really that small.
Well, that’s how it seems through her cloths.
They’ll be a pleasure for me.
Washing them in the bathroom, and doing this and that in the bedroom.

When we take off her cloths, are they really that small?

For a woman with breasts as big as Roxanne’s, her breasts will be too big for the leather armor.
Thus, offering the leather armor is equal to saying she’s flat chested.

“Sorry, I didn’t have that kind of meaning.”
“It’s ok, I know they are small.”
“No, they are fine to look at, like decorations.”

Roxanne tries to comfort her.
Like decorations. An erotic person like me can't understand that.

It got quiet, and I passed the leather jacket to Sherry.
I can understand her feelings.
Roxanne, I think your comforting may have had the opposite effect.
I wait for Sherry to try on the shoes, and then take them both to the weapons shop.

"This is a hammer."

Sherry had recovered, and called me over to the corner of the weapon store.
The hammers, morning stars & maces were kept there.
There was quite a range of sizes.

"There is a variety."
"The first cheap one will be fine."

Sherry pointed towards a club.
A club?

Club hammer.

It seems to be classified as a hammer.
It doesn't have the feeling of a hammer, isn't it different?
I find one with an empty skill slot and pass it to Sherry.

"This one looks sturdy."
"Thank you."

I need to buy more than one item for the discount.
I just wanted the hammer, is there anything else I need?
Is there an upgrade for my cane or Roxanne's scimitar?
Maybe I should buy a spear?

With that thought, it occurs to me there might be a job from defeating an enemy with a spear.
Lancer, or perhaps Phalanx?

I find a copper spear with an empty skill slot.

I ask the storekeeper, and he says the copper spear is an affordable item for beginners.
The shaft is made from wood, even though it's a copper spear.
Maybe the blade point is made of copper.

"Is the hammer alright?"
"Yes. Thank you very much."

It's the type of club Sherry chose.
I pass the spear and club to the storekeeper to buy them.
840 nars in total. The price of the copper spear seems a little high.

"There you go."
"Thank you."

As I pass Sherry the club I get a surprise.
Her eyes are sparkling.

"Ah, um, it's not a big deal."
"Thank you very much."

Isn't it something trivial?

"Isn't it just something small?"
"It's not, because a slave is normally never allowed to carry around weapons."

Roxanne teaches me quietly.
So that's it?
Looking at Sherry's reaction, it's easy to imagine.
Roxanne has always had the scimitar at her waist though.

After that we buy some socks and another pair of the pumpkin colored underpants at the clothing store, and then a rucksack, a small wooden bucket, and some toothpicks at the general store.
I then buy some cooking ingredients and return to the house.
It was easy since we warped straight from the adventurers guild to the house.

“Make dinner while I prepare the bath.”
“Certainly.”
“Don’t I need to help you with the bath?”

Sherry asks.

“It’s quite hot and difficult.”

It helps to have someone moving the hot water from the jar to the bath tub, but it isn’t necessary.
The temperature of the bathroom becomes hot and hard to bear.
To work in the bathroom, it’s fine to just have one person doing it.
My magic is needed to boil the water, so it has to be me.

Sherry doesn’t seem to understand as I head for the bathroom.
Even though it’s troublesome, it isn’t bad if I think about the result.
Be troubled now, and enjoy it later.
A fine person must be like that.

“We can eat all this?”

In the middle of the job, my MP has decreased so I head to the kitchen and hear Sherry & Roxanne.

“Yes, Sherry. Eat as much as you want without holding back.”
“But this is his food?”
“We are making it for three people.”
“Three people?”

There seems to be a problem with the quantity of food.
Are dwarves gluttonous?

“Yes.”
“But the meat bought is such good quality, and the highest quality bread was bought. I thought we’d just be getting leftovers?”

What does Sherry mean?
I can’t hear the response, so I call out and interrupt it.

“Roxanne, can you do the usual thing?”
“Yes Master.”

Roxanne comes and I pass her the leather gloves and wooden shield.
I put the leather hat on her head.
Of course I pat her dog ears as I do it.

“I’m looking forward to the delicious food. Thank you.”

Sherry comes over.
Well, it will depend on your cooking if it’s delicious.

“We are going to the Labyrinth, do you want to come as well Sherry?”
“To the Labyrinth?”
“You don’t have to. If you need to stay and tend to the cooking then it’s alright not to come.”
“It will be fine for a while, can I come?”

Sherry wants to come, so I pass her the leather mittens.
I cover Sherry’s head with a leather hat.

“Amazing.”

Sherry’s hair is very thick.
Or should I say dense?
I’ve been interested since I first saw it.

“It’s because dwarves have a lot of hair.”
“Is that so?”
“Dwarven men get beards, but dwarven females don’t so instead they get a large amount of hair on their head.”
“I see.”

There’s still some distance betweeen the hat and her scalp.
It seems like it would absorb shock even without a helmet.
When moving the hat, the entire hair shakes.
Even though it isn’t curly, it remind me of an afro.

“I cut it regularly, but it grows right back.”

I get the feeling that dwarves are a race who are harassed because of their hair.

“Shall we go?”

I prepare my equipment, and pull out Durandal.
We go to the fifth floor of Vale’s labyrinth.

We are on the fifth floor because Durandal can kill everything in a single blow here.
Sherry would get pulled into the fight if it was dragged out.
I should gradually get her used to it instead of taking her straight to the seventh floor.

Also, killing things in one blow is cooler.
I want to show off to our new party member, Sherry.
A beautiful girl.
My perverted thoughts get the best of me.

“Let’s see, umm.”
“This way.”

Roxanne points the way towards a demon.
Sherry looks puzzled, probably because it wouldn’t be possible to get here with [Field walk].

“I’ve heard that people from the wolf tribe can smell demons, can you do that Roxanne?”
“Yes.”
“That’s amazing.”

Roxanne shows off her cool side before I do.
Well, there’s no helping it.

“There.”

After moving for a while we come across the demon.
It’s actually two cheep sheep that Roxanne found.

“Ah. Really. So quick. As expected.”

I understand the feeling.
Sherry was an explorer Lv10, so it's likely that she's been in the Labyrinth.

When Roxanne isn't around I also wander endlessly around the Labyrinth.
I don't encounter things often.
It might even take longer than 10 minutes.

I am really thankful for Roxanne.
After hearing Sherry's words, my gratitude for Roxanne is renewed.

"Thank you Roxanne. Let's go."
"Yes."

We stand side by side, and advance.
I swing my sword at the first demon to come.
Durandal is swung down on it's shoulder.
The sheep collapses.

Look at my swordplay.
I am cool.
My too cool display.

I also pierce the side of the cheep sheep that Roxanne is keeping busy.
A single blow.
The demon collapses, becomes smoke, and dissapears.

"Great! Amazing!"

It probably is.

"How did you evade it so magnificently?"

Damn.
It seems Roxanne stole the show with her dodging while I was fighting.

Chapter 50 - Human

“If you carefully watch the demon you can understand how it’s going to move, so you only need to move your body a little.”

Roxanne gives Sherry a lecture about evasive action.
It’s difficult to understand.
Being taught by Roxanne isn’t a bad thing however.
At first I was the only one being taught by Roxanne’s explanations.
I notice that Sherry is making a slightly troubled face.
Like she wants to escape the lecture.
Well, I can understand that feeling.

“Which way should we head next?”
“Ah, yes, this way.”

I decided to help her out.

Roxanne seems to be abnormal.
I had wondered if all the people of this world had such amazing battle ability, but that doesn’t seem to be the case.
It’s nice.

Sherry is a sensible person. She’s a regular person.
She’s a kindred spirit.
Sherry and I exchange a glance.

“It’s just been the two of us in the Labyrinth until now.”
“It must have been hard.”

Without anyone saying so, I felt it was necessary to start a conversation.
I feel like a guy who understands gazes now.
Sherry and my feelings are united as one.

After that we keep hunting to recover my MP.
Is that enough of a hunt yet?

“Shall we head back?”

We returned to the house using [Warp].

“We used [Warp] magic to enter the Labyrinth?”

When we return to the house, Sherry approaches me with a question.
Crap.
The person with common sense is here.

Sherry’s eyes are sparkling.
It doesn’t feel forceful since she’s so short.
It’s rather cute.
Those eyes make me forget it would be bad to answer too many questions.

“That’s right.”
“But, isn’t there an incantation?”
“Well, there might be one.”

That reminds me that I’ve only ever use [Warp] with [Incantation Omission].
When I used it in the adventurers guild I recited my superficial knowledge of the [Field walk] incantation.
It’s possible that if I remove the [Incantation Omission] skill that there will be an incantation for [Warp].

“It didn’t seem like you recited anything beforehand.”
“Master can use magic even without an incantation.”
“Really?”
“Really.”

Roxanne gives me a helping hand.

“How it works, even though I’m doing it I can’t explain it.”
“I understand.”

You can understand that it can’t be understood.
Sherry is quite smart.
I don’t understand why it’s possible at all.

Why can you breathe? How do you move your hands and feet? I’m not a biologist so it would be hard to explain.

If I asked a fish in the sea why it didn't drown I'd be likely to embarrass it.
A fish can swim, so it's possible to swim. A bird can fly, so it's possible to fly.
Sherry murmurs "why" and starts thinking about it on her own.

"Also, you killed everything in a single blow, you must be strong."
"Ah, yes."

I did my best to show off, but it doesn't seem to have made much of an impression.
Well, strength is necessary to earn money in the Labyrinth, so when you see that I can buy two slaves you probably already realize that I'm strong.
I think you're quite smart.

"May I know what level you are?"
"I'm explorer Lv33."

It just went up to Lv33.
The pace of improvement has slowed down lately.
It seems quite serious when my level goes up.

"What?"

When I answer, Roxanne raises a boisterous voice from the side.

"What?"
"Master was Lv27"
"Well, I was then."

That reminds me, I may have been Lv27 when Roxanne asked me.

"Then."
"It goes up regularly."
"Goes up."

It might have been about 20 days ago that I told Roxanne.
Since my experience increases 100 times faster than a regular person it can't be helped.
Even Roxanne has gone up ten or more levels since the start.

“Can a demon be killed in a single blow by a Lv33 explorer? Is it the attack power of the sword?”

Sherry seems to be watching everything.
She feels like an enemy watching Durandal.

“The level of this sword… is a secret.”

I’ll escape to the bathroom.
Sherry nods slightly as I run away.

“Master, we have hot coals.”

After a while, two people came to the bathroom with a stick.
This isn’t the pursuit I was worried about.
It’s true that I was pursued, but it’s not for answers.

“Oh, can Sherry make a fire?”

Usually a blacksmith will use fire.
If you don’t use magic, making a fire in this world without matches might be difficult.
The master smith job may require you to be able to make a fire, well it’s a possibility.

“Yes, I can.”

Well, it was easily checked.
It seems to be wrong.
We could try melting metal later.

What?
Roxanne is looking at me with a delicate expression.
Is it because I’m asking Sherry, and not her?

Not that. It’s not that, Roxanne.
This is a misunderstanding.

“I will always make fire when Roxanne needs it.”
“Yes, Master.”

I used [Fireball] to set fire to a branch, and passed it to Roxanne.
Roxanne smiled approvingly.

I'm not really sure what just happened myself.
I'm so tired.

To prepare the bath we entered the Labyrinth several times after that.
Sherry watched the fire, and Roxanne and I hunted on the seventh floor of Vale's Labyrinth.

"Why do you go to the Labyrinth?"

Sherry asks a lot of questions.

"It's quite tiring to prepare the bath so it's to relieve stress."

Roxanne gave a strange answer.
Is that how Roxanne see's me?
It might be my fault for not explaining it.

"The purpose is to recover the MP I've spent conjuring magic."
"Does the sword have a MP recovery skill?
"It has MP absorption."
"MP absorption…"

Sherry stares at Durandal.

"You've heard of it?"
"Ah, yes. MP absorption is created from combining the monster card from the Kobald with the monster card from an insectivorous scissor type plant. It's a very valuable skill."

I don't understand the whole lot, but it's as expected of a dwarf.
She seems to know things related to the master smith well.

"Do you know what a rabbit's monster card becomes?"
"It's an [incantation delay] when fused with a weapon."
"Oh, that's good to know. It may come in useful."

This is good.
This saves me using a valuable item as an experiment.
We won't need to waste time checking it.

"Thank you."
"Also, is [incantation delay] different to [incantation interruption]?"

Durandal has [incantation interruption].

"[Incantation delay] delay's the completion of an incantation. [Incantation interruption] cancels the incantation while it's in progress. If you fuse the rabbit's monster card with the kobold's monster card it becomes [Incantation interruption].
"So [Incantation delay] delays it, and [Incantation interruption] cancels it?"

I don't really understand the difference.

"Is [Incantation interruption] the better skill?"

Roxanne asks it plainly.
Even I'm not sure.

"Yes. But if all members of a party surround a demon while using [Incantation delay] weapons, they can probably defeat it before the incantation ends."

So if the combined effects of [Incantation delay] are more than a demon's incantation casting speed then the demon might never complete it's incantation.
Even if the damage done isn't much it all adds up eventually.
It's like a zerg attack.

"Other actions cannot be done while chanting an incantation."
"Really? So [incantation delay] is quite good."

Roxanne's statement is worth thinking about.
When cancelling an incantation with [incantation interruption] an attack normally follows up afterwards.
If the incantation is delayed instead of cancelled then there won't be an

attack.
If you keep delaying it then the attack will never happen.

It's possible that [incantation delay] is the stronger of the two.

"Keep in mind that demons aren't always on their own, and occasionally a demon will stop it's incantation on it's own. It's also quite difficult to get a weapon with incantation delay for every party member. It's best to consider other options. This is a good strategy against bosses on lower floors, but [incantation interruption] that can cancel moves becomes the better of the two as you work your way up."
"I see. So [Incantation interruption] is a good skill.

Roxanne nods.
So it's not as good as it seemed.
It's mainly good for bosses on lower floors.

"So it's bad if we only have the rabbit monster's card if we want the skill [Incantation interruption]?
"You need the monster card from the kobold too. The kobolds monster card is special and has a function that strengthens the skill of the monster card it is fused with."

I thought the kobold was like an annoying insect monster with weak, cheap drops, but it had an advantage like this?

"So the monster card of the kobold? It might be good to hunt some kobolds."
"Um, do you happen to have the rabbit monsters card?"
"Ah. Yes."
"We got it this morning."

Roxanne confirms it.
I exchange a glance, and nod.

"You probably know already, but weapons with skills and monster cards are auctioned off in Quratar's merchants guild. You can sell off your monster card there too."

This news is new to me of course.

"…Roxanne, did you know this?"
"Um. I have heard a rumor."

Roxanne and I probably look a little less cool to Sherry now.

"I'm from a far off country. Anything you can teach me is welcome."
"Sure."

Now my good impression has decreased a bit.
It can't be helped when it comes to things I don't know.

"Can you buy the kobolds monster card at the auction?"
"It's possible. Does that mean you have connections to a master smith?"

Sherry is the connection.
I'll keep that quiet for now.

"Yes. Thank you for the explanation Sherry, I've learned a lot. Your knowledge is quite useful Sherry."
"No… I'm not that great."
"Please keep me informed in the future as well."
"Ah, Thank you."

I praised Sherry, then returned to the Labyrinth.
In the labyrinth I make sure to remember to praise Roxanne when she finds a demon so she knows she is still useful.
I have to be careful in various ways.
Two slaves seems to be more difficult than I thought.

After returning from the labyrinth I create hot water several times, then finally the bath is ready.
I float a lemon on it, and then go out.

"Thank you very much."

Roxanne passes me a towel.
I wipe away my sweat.

“Thank you.”
“The meal is ready.”
“Shall we eat?”

In the dining room, the dishes are layed up on the table.
Judging from the position of the plates, Sherry seems to be next to Roxanne.

“I’ve made the dwarven dish borscht.” TN: It’s actually a Russian/Ukrainian dish I think.

Sherry says.
She says it’s borscht, but is it a close translation?
It might be a dish similar to borscht.

“It looks good.”
“I hope it meets your tastes.”

There is a red soup in the center of the table.
Dwarves seem to have their own cuisine in this world.

When I sit, Roxanne sits in front of me.
She thinks that we should use the space on the table a little more.

“Your sitting there?”
“It’s the best seat.”

Is it a slave and master thing?
I’m not sure.

“Sit down Sherry.”
“Um, am I allowed to sit?”
“Would you prefer to eat while standing?”
“I’m allowed to eat?”

What is she saying?

“Master likes company for his meals. Master, it’s normally very rare for a slave to eat the same meal with their Master.”

I let Roxanne explain, and Sherry sits down.
It's not a problem if it's my preference.

I take the borscht from the center of the table without anyone protesting.
Roxanne taught me this.
It's the Master's job to serve soup.

I don't understand why, but it isn't a big deal.
When in Rome, do as the Romans do.

First of all I fill a plate for myself..
This is what Roxanne told me.
Next, I'll fill a plate for Sherry.
I can feel Roxanne's eyes on me, so I put the plate in front of Roxanne instead.

"Here you go."
"Thank you, Master."

It's the dwarven dish that Sherry made, so I'm looking forward to eating it.
Last, I place a dish in front of Sherry.
It looks like she had Roxanne's help with the stir-frying of the mean and vegetables, and with the bread.
I'm not sure though.

"Let's dig in."

First of all, the borscht.
Mmmm.
It's a good taste, but a bit sweet.

It has a country style feeling.
The ingredients are cut quite chunkily.
If I cut it finely maybe it would be like minestrone.

"It's delicious."
"Thank you."

“Quite good. That reminds me, the wolf tribe have the beast soldier job, and the dwarves have the master smith job. Do the humans have a race specific job?”

I try to start a conversation.
There’s also the hotel job that the person in Vale’s inn had which might have been a racial job for his species.
It feels unnatural that only humans don’t have one.

Is Hero a racial job possibly?
I think it’s too strong for that to be the case.

“Oh…”
“Um, oh…”

Their reactions are bad.
Did I say something odd?

“I think it would be good to be loved by Master.”
“I am ready also.”

What are they talking about?
I was asking about a job.

“What?”
“The humans seem to be a race with an extremely large sex drive.”

Sherry explains.
I think I’ve heard something like this.
Humans will have all kinds of sex. Beastiality, homosexual sex, sex with minors, rape, incest, even if there is no chance of reproduction from it they’ll still do everything.
Humans have an instinct to do anything.

The humans in this world seem to cause havoc too.
War and destruction is in our nature.

“Is that so?”
“Since it’s such a race, the have the job of Sex Maniac that they get when immersed in their desires. It’s a human specific job.”

The Sex Maniac job.
Immersed in sexual desire.
Human.

Chapter 51 - Sex maniac

Man is a being with a massive sexual appetite.
Roxanne has a subtle smile because of it.
There's no helping my sexual desire since I now have two sex slaves.
Well, there's nothing I can do about it.
There's really nothing I can do about it.
It's a man thing.

Since there's no helping it, I was the first to enter the bath after the meal.

"Everyone take off your cloths and join me in the bath."

I declare it and take off my cloths.
Being slightly forceful is necessary so Sherry is like Roxanne and doesn't complain.
Chance to complain is limited if we get in quickly.

I undressed quickly, and entered the bath a bit early.
I wanted to watch the ladies undressing, but I also needed to adjust the temperature of the water.

"May I enter the bath? Baths are things that only nobles and royalty use."
"It's fine, lets get in together."

Roxanne persuades her.
It seems things are alright.
Sherry will get in with us.

The lantern is set up, and the temperature of the bath is checked.
It's a little hot, but I don't think I need to add any water.
It's rather good.
Since I've used the bath several times my experience is showing.

Adjusting the temperature is hard and easiest done by adding some water of a suitable temperature.
I can bring hot water in a jar, but it's hard to raise the temperature like that.
It's easier to cool the temperature down.
Next time I'll make sure to use more heat.

“Roxanne’s are really big.”
“That’s not true.”
“But mine….”

As I’m checking the temperature I can hear two people chatting.
What those two are doing.
I’m jealous!
It’s foul play for them to enjoy it on their own.

“Master, I’m coming in.”

Roxanne and her foul play enters the bathroom.
That’s definitely a foul.
Well, they are huge.

“Ahh… Excuse me.”

Sherry comes in while looking down and hiding her chest.
Her cloths have been taken off and she’s naked.
Oh the privilege of being the owner!

Even though she is small and thin, Sherry’s style is good.
Her breasts also help her image.
They have some volume.
Her soft fair skin is dazzling.

“Well, should I wash?”

Even though I have the owners privilege I can’t just keep staring forever.
Lathering some soap up I started to wash her body.
Straight for her body.

“Yes.”

Roxanne comes in front of me.
There’s big things shaking right in front of my eyes.
My eyes have no choice but to look.

“A~u. I thought so.”

Sherry laments.
My eyes stay locked on Roxanne's chest though.
My hands go forward involuntarily.

I rub the soap over Roxanne.
The place I want to wash the most is washed the most.
I gently wash with both hands.
I trace my hands along the curve of the swelling mounds.

Roxanne's chest is great.
This feeling, this elasticity, this pounding, this weight.
Even without one of those they would still be wonderful.
This is the best.

"The best."
"Thank you."

The head and the back, Roxanne is one big mass of bubbles, excluding her tail.

"Next is Sherry."
"Ah. Yes."

If Sherry is standing nearby she really seems quite small.
I can't even see what expression she's making from my position.
She's thin, small and beautiful.

I kneel in the lamplight, and start painting bubbles.
I can go for her chest without holding back.
I extended my hand and started painting the bubbles on her collarbone.

"A~u, it's amazing."

This is quite good.
Roxanne's chest is big enough to spill out of the palms of my hands, will Sherry's chest fit in my hands completely?
A nice fit feeling will also be irresistibly good.

Spilling out is good, but a comfortable fit is also good.
The feeling of holding small birds or hamsters in the palm of your hand.

“Ah. Um. I’m sorry I’m so small.”
“You aren’t that small.”
“When I was in the village I thought that, but in the slave traders building there were people with huge chests and they were popular.”

Men buying sex slaves.
I don’t want to comment about it since I’m one of them.

“It’s fine, there’s no problem.”
“But Roxanne is…”

There’s already been some comparing.

“Sherry is quite short compared to Roxanne, and I don’t think it can be helped that her chest is smaller. I think you are quite well off for your height.”

There’s 20-30 centimeters of difference in their heights, so I think the difference in the size of their chests is natural.
If someone Sherry’s height had a chest like Roxanne I think it would be quite strange.
Since Sherry is short, I think her proportions have a good ratio.

“That’s right Sherry.”
“Really?”
“Really.”
“Ah, Thank you.”

Sherry calms down and I paint bubbles over her whole body.
I can enjoy her chest at any time again later.

“Now Sherry, we wash Master.”
“Yes. Um, how?”
“I do it like this.”

Roxanne embraces me from the left.
My left arm is caught in the valley of her chest. It’s a wondrous thing.
It’s completely surrounded by her breasts.
A wall of flesh presses around my arm.

And from the right is Sherry.
She doesn't have any strength, but it's lovely.

This is unbearable.
I am being washed carefully by two people.
They are washing from the right and the left, instead of the front and the back, and it's wonderful.

"Roxanne and I washed our hair yesterday, so Sherry's hair gets washed today. Sherry come in front of me, and Roxanne get behind her."

Sherry stands in front of me.
Since she's small it's a good height for washing her hair.
Her head comes up to the height I stretch out my arms.

I lather up some soap and rub it into her hair.
After rubbing her hair, large amounts of bubbles start forming.

Roxanne comes to my back.
Even though I asked her to go to Sherry's back.
Unexpectedly it became a line of washing.

I feel a rich swelling like balloons on my back.
Since it's my back I can't see what's happening.
I have to endure the sensations.

There's no choice so I continue to wash Sherry in front of me.
I scrub her hair to divert my attention.

Sherry's hair is quite fine.
There's not much resistance when rubbing through my fingers.
It doesn't look like it, but it feels light like cotton.

"This is good. Your hair is really soft and nice feeling."
"Ah, Thank you."
"It's hard to believe it's hair."

Because she's a dwarf, she might have different characteristics to humans.
The thin, light hair amuses me.
The bubbles started to decrease, so I add more soap.

After washing enough, we rinsed the soap down the drain.
Sherry's wet dark hair became flat and stuck to her skin.
She looks sort of like a doll.
Beautiful.

I got into the bath.
I dare to say it.
Roxanne's tail is amazing in the water.

Embracing Roxanne, I reached down and pat her tail.
The smooth feeling of it is irresistible.
I plop myself down into the bath while carrying Roxanne.

"Get in too, Sherry."
"Ah, yes."

Sherry timidly climbed in.
While shyly hiding her body, she slowly lowered herself into the water.
Despite her modesty, I pulled her towards me.
Roxanne is to my right, and Sherry is on my left.

This.
This luxury. This prosperity. This glorious feast.

A beautiful woman to my left and right.
I can freely touch their skin directly because we are naked in the bath.
Roxanne's big chest to my right.
Sherry's delicate lovely body to my left.

You could say that this is every man's dream.
This would be Hideyoshi's golden tea room, or Napoleon's coronation.
If it were Hitler, maybe a wedding ceremony?
Well, he commit suicide.

After the bath, two people help dry my body, and then we head to the bedroom.
Honestly, I did consider attacking them both in the bathroom.
There isn't any light in the bedroom.
While I regret it a little that I won't be able to see their bodies, it might be unavoidable.

"Come on, you two."
"Yes Master."
"Ah, yes. Um, is it alright for me to wear something so nice?"

Sherry speaks with a quiet voice.
She seems to have borrowed a white camisole from Roxanne for a night dress.
Roxanne is wearing a pink camisole.
I can't see them well because there is no light.

“It’s fine.”
“Thank you.”
“Roxanne is also wearing one.”
“Well, she is number one.”

It’s good that Roxanne isn’t being unkind to Sherry.

“Ah, Sherry. Kiss me good night before I go to sleep, and kiss me good morning when I wake up.”

I told her the house rule, which Roxanne also has to follow.
I pulled Sherry into an embrace.
She is so petite it feels like she might break.

I can’t hold out any longer.
My endurance is at it’s limits.

We kissed.

“Ah…”

As I kissed Sherry, Roxanne let out a small voice.
Just barely loud enough to hear.
A very small quiet voice.
It seems slightly sad.

It’s a scream.
It must be a scream.
Even though she doesn’t look gloomy, I can understand it from that voice.

Roxanne wants her “turn”.
That seems to be it.

There’s another person with her Master.
Roxanne was first for everything before Sherry came.
First when serving meals, and first washing in the bathroom.

Of course that was the same with the good night kiss.
I should have kissed Roxanne before Sherry.

Damn.
I've stepped on a land mine.
I've stomped on Roxanne's honor.

Bad.
Very bad.
Even I think it's bad.
I'm bad because I've done something so thoughtless.

After kissing Sherry, I don't understand the sensations.
I don't understand the taste, I don't understand the softness.
The sole saving thing is that I didn't use my tongue.

What should I do?
How do I do this?

Think.
I need to think of something.
Don't just act, think!

"Ah, since this is a good night kiss, I'm saving the best, Roxanne for last."

This. Just this.
I figured out an excuse.
I forcefully rationalized it.
Somehow I found a fix for it.

"Yes, Master."

Roxanne's cheerful voice had changed drastically.
Safe.
I'm safe!
I've avoided the death sentence!

I sprawled down on the bed.
The news paper in my head has a headline saying I'm innocent.
Thank you.
The false accusation has been cleared.

I embraced Roxanne to my side.
Let's show something amazing.
I suck on Roxanne's lips relentlessly.

Revenge.
The fires of revenge burn brightly in my heart.
According to the "turn", will this satisfy Roxanne?

Revenge has been achieved, and I lay exhausted on the bed.
I lay there comfortably and fatigued.
My mind doesn't want to do anything now.

I take a deep breath.
As I catch my breath I think of what should be done.
TN: Some time later…
色魔 Lv1
Sex Maniac Lv1
Effects: Small intellect increase, small MP increase, increased energy, abstinence attack.

What?
There it is.
A new job has been acquired.

Well, I had that kind of feeling.
This is expected if I do it so much.

What was the condition for getting this job?
Is it to have sex with two or more of the opposite sex?
Is it to have sex with two or more of the opposite sex at the same time?
Or…

I think about the intense actions from earlier.
Well, I have an idea of the conditions.

Maybe I got a little too into it?
Did I get excited more than normal?
Intensity and endurance, maybe that's it.

It should be alright since there were two partners.
I didn't put much strain on Sherry since it was her first time.
It might have been a bit more serious with Roxanne though.

Well, it seems I fall into the human category.
The human racial job is really Sex Maniac.
Humans might be horrible.

Two small increases and a medium increase is equivalent to Roxanne's Beast Soldier.
That might be a characteristic of a racial job.

Sex Maniac's spirit, intellect and MP increases will be useful as a supporting job for Wizard.
It wouldn't be good on it's own, but it should be quite useful for me.

"Master, she seems to be resting."

While quietly thinking, I heard Roxanne's voice.
She's not asleep.
Roxanne smoothed out my sweaty hair.

"Looks like it."
"That was intense."

Since I was lost in thought, I hadn't noticed.
As I spoke to Roxanne, I moved Sherry aside.
Since she is small, she isn't heavy at all.

"Was it alright?"
"Yes. With Sherry here today I was more enthusiastic than normal. I wasn't sure what to expect, if I'd like it, but it's good that Sherry came."

Roxanne seems to have been a bit anxious about it.
I thank Roxanne in my heart.
I'm glad that I love Roxanne for being Roxanne.

"Things are fine?"
"Yes, Master is a good Master and even now didn't overdo it with Sherry."

I wanted to try out the increased energy and skill from the Sex Maniac job, but it doesn't seem like the time for it.

"Thank you."
"Thank you too."

The conversation felt like a lullaby, and my consciousness slipped away.

Chapter 52 - Never give up (TL: Title originally in English)

When I wake up, I was hugging Roxanne like a pillow.

Our legs entwined. My hands around Roxanne's back.

Waking up so early in the morning with beautiful women on both sides is really pleasant.

My mornings have never been so pleasant before.

Lying like this between the two, I can't move.

Both my hands and feet are completely clinging to Roxanne.

Have I really been longing for Roxanne's back hair so much?

I wonder if Sherry is too small to be a body pillow.

Roxanne's breasts are supple as ever.

Because I'm hugging her from front, I can savor this suppleness to my heart's content.

I tighten my embrace a little to test it out.

Having gotten squeezed a little, they spring back out with incredible force.

This is irresistible.

“N～”

While I was having fun with her breasts, Roxanne kisses me.

This is bad.

It seems she’s up.

I’m totally busted.

“Good morning, master.”

“G-Good morning.”

I greet her back in a constrained voice.

“Ah, good morning.”

Sherry too seems to be up.

For she greets from behind me.

Feeling guilty, I take my arms away from around Roxanne, turn around, and embrace Sherry.

“Good morning to you too, Sherry.”

I say that and place my lips on hers.

Sherry is still clumsy at kissing.

So it’s difficult to kiss her.

But I have come to love it somehow.

Although it feels a lot better how actively Roxanne responds to my kiss, it's wrong to compare them, I think.

Sherry will get accustomed to it over time.

I can't help but seek Roxanne's lips again when I was changing into my clothes.

Roxanne's tongue entwines with mine.

Our tongues entwined. Lips wriggling. Mouths slurping.

Because Roxanne said she loves it, there shouldn't be any problem.

Because I haven't selected Sex Maniac job yet, it shouldn't be Enhanced Vigor skill at work.

Kaga Michio Male 17 years old

Explorer Lv33 Hero Lv30 Wizard Lv32 Monk Lv 31 Alchemist Lv 17

Equipment: Wand Leather Cap Hide Armor Hide Gloves Leather Boots

Roxanne Female 16 years old

Beast Warrior Lv19

Equipment: Scimitar Wooden Shield Hide Cap Hide Jacket Hide Gloves Hide Boots

Sherry Female 16 years old

Villager Lv3

Equipment: Hammer Hide Cap Hide Jacket Hide Mitten Sandal Boots

We check our stuff and get ready to go.

The more jobs I get, the more jobs I want to select.

Because Party Formation skill is necessary, I can not cancel Explorer job.

Effects of Hero and Wizard jobs are too great to cancel.

Taking emergency situations into consideration, I can not cancel Monk job either.

Now it all comes down to Alchemist, Cook and Sex Maniac. I can't decide on one.

Other people can pick only one job at a time. Luxury of choice can be problematic sometimes.

Human greed knows no bounds after all.

By the way, it seems party will dissolve automatically, if I cancel Explorer job.

Also, to make use of Item Box skill of Cook job, Explorer job can alternatively be entrusted to another member of the party.

"All ready."

"Let's go then."

Sherry reports and we Warp to the labyrinth.

Early morning. Vale town labyrinth floor 2.

"Master, why here?"

"Vale town labyrinth floor 2 is perfect for Sherry's first time in our party."

Roxanne can tell from the smell that it's not Quratar town labyrinth floor 7

I shortly explain it to ease her doubts.

"I see. I understand."

“First, I want to see Sherry’s fighting style. I will weaken the monsters with my magic, then Sherry will attack and finish off what’s left.”

“Y-Yes.”

“Roxanne will take the frontline and hold the monsters back.”

“Very well.”

I open up bonus points distribution interface, and allocate half of the points to Intelligence to be able to kill Lv2 monsters in one magic attack.

Surviving monsters shall be left for Sherry.

Sherry swings her hammer.

And hits a Green Caterpillar Lv2 in its guts.

That must have been quite an impact.

Enraged, the monster launches a counterattack. Roxanne easily sidesteps.

For Roxanne, dodging that was a piece of cake.

Sherry takes that opportunity to strike it with her hammer.

Good team work.

With that, Sherry takes out the monster.

“Oh well, that was no good.”

I immediately open up party job settings interface, but Master Smith job was not there.

So taking them out with hammer is not the condition.

Or perhaps it also needs Villager Lv5?

“Was it not good enough?”

“Ah, no, Sherry did well. Next time, please use this spear.”

Oops, a slip of tongue.

It was not completely in vain, I think.

After that, we tried copper spear, copper sword, and bare-handed attacks, but nothing resulted in a new job.

Most probably, Villager Lv5 is another condition for Swordsman and Monk.

To ascertain it, we will have to wait for Villager job to level up.

“Uh!”

As expected, Sherry is taking hits from monsters when she takes them on bare-handed.

It can’t be helped. I too received hits from monsters when I was fighting bare-handed.

But it’s not to the extent of causing concern, for Roxanne is engaging them from the front.

“How are the monster attacks? Is their level too high?”

I ask Sherry while healing her injuries.

“I-Is this Recovery magic?”

“That is so.”

“Like I thought, multiple jobs… Ah, no. One or two attacks of this extent are not a problem.”

Sherry answers me while fighting.

Even under attack, she looks composed.

To get Recovery magic, you have to understand pain, you have to receive damage.

It seems safe now to proceed.

Next, it will be I to take them out with hammer.

By acquiring a job from taking a monster out with hammer, it can be ascertained whether or not taking a monster out with hammer is the condition to acquire Master Smith job.

I raise my hammer up high and crash it down hard on a Green Caterpillar Lv2.

“Unfortunately, I’m not as skillful.”

“To swing that, it would be better to use centrifugal force more.”

Hammer is more difficult for me to use than swords because I’m not used to it.

Because it’s centre of gravity is located at the farther end, you use its weight to strike.

Each weapon has its own qualities.

The monster is somehow dead, and I immediately check out my jobs.

A moment of anxiety. Anxiety of anticipation.

However, there is no new job.

I use spear next but the result remains same.

“What do I do now?”

“No, I have to keep trying.”

I now have Roxanne use spear and hammer to see if she gets a new job.

I use wand now to take out monsters, but nothing. That's right, not all weapons have related jobs, it seems.

Or probably the conditions to acquire them are not yet met?

In the end, we were not able to acquire any new job, including Master Smith.

"Getting used to it is not difficult, but strength is necessary to wield it. I still like swords better, however."

Roxanne comments as she takes out a monster with hammer.

Hammer seems to be exclusive to Sherry here.

Although she looks like she can use spear, I decide against it, for Roxanne is our vanguard. She confronts monsters from close distance, while spear needs you to maintain some distance.

Roxanne should continue to be our vanguard.

Having tried various things out, we move to Quratar town labyrinth to go further up the floors.

Sherry was not able to try out Kobolds on Vale town labyrinth floor 3, but it can't be helped.

Even if we go up to higher floors, Sherry can fight the monsters without any difficulty.

Sherry might be small and cute, but when she is in battle, she looks dignified.

She might not be at Roxanne's level, but she is closer to me.

In the world of Rakugo, I'm a Rakugo artist who fortunately got better plot, and now I'm competing with top Rakugo artists who got better skills than

me. Take the plot away from me, and I'm hardly competing with those below me. (TL: Rakugo is traditional comic storytelling in Japan.)

If I think about it, Sherry and I are probably competing with each other.

"Uh!"

We come across a group of 3 monsters on floor 5. Sherry receives an attack from a monster.

Facing a group of 3, I too receive attacks.

"Are you alright?"

"I'm fine. I have fought on floor 8 before. Floor 5 should not be a problem."

I ask while healing her injuries. Sherry firmly replies.

"No, equipment and party members among other things are different this time. It's better to use zero-based approach. Also, monsters attack aggressively every so often."

"Thank you. Still, I'll be fine."

Real cause of my concern is the fact that I have leveled her down from Explorer Lv10 to Villager Lv3.

I have yet to tell her about her job change.

I had no choice but to postpone this.

With time, when Sherry comes to trust me more, she might accept her job change.

"I hope you will be."

When I look at Roxanne for her opinion, she nods reassuringly.

Although I'm not completely free of my worries, it seems fine for now.

We move to floor 6.

To test Sex Maniac job, I add one more job slot to make it 6 jobs.

Because it's scary to suddenly go fight without Plating.

"Continuing on from where I left off last night, let's see what kind of skill this Sex Maniac job has."

"Sherry, do you know about it?"

Because it appears awkward to ask only Sherry about such a thing, I turn to Roxanne, who simply shrugs.

'Why are you asking me?' kind of expression.

Okay, from now on, I will direct all my questions to Sherry.

"I don't know either. This job is not openly known, so not many rumors about it are passed around."

Yeah, it would be terrible to talk about such a thing.

Even if you successfully get Sex Maniac job, you won't talk to your parents and siblings about it with your chest puffed with pride.

And on top of that, the condition for acquiring it.

Sex Maniac Lv1

Effects: Medium Increase in Spirit Small Increase in Intelligence Small Increase in MP

Skills: Enhanced Vigor Celibacy Strike

Presumably, Enhanced Vigor is a passive skill and Celibacy Strike is an active skill.

Having selected Sex Maniac job, what I'm afraid of is getting turned on indiscriminately by anyone.

However, if it's Roxanne, I would obviously not mind doing this and that.

It won't be out of norm.

You can't live long with Sex Maniac job, when you're in heat all the time.

But there's always prison.

So it's probably gonna be alright.

Actually it might be possible to live in confinement.

In the whole town, I haven't seen a single human with Sex Maniac job.

So it is indeed not a job that's publicly known.

I try to test out Celibacy Strike.

Roxanne finds a Mino Lv6 as I take Durandal out.

Calling for Celibacy Strike in my mind, I slash at the Mino.

Relying on an attack I'm using for the first time, I hit that Mino Lv6.

What's this?

Weak!

So weak!

Pathetically slow attack!

Perhaps Celibacy Strike is not an active skill, considering how weak that attack was? An active skill has to be better than that.

Is Celibacy Strike only for celibates to use?

That's not fair!

Once again. This time I try normal attack.

The monster was still not down.

It takes two normal attacks of Durandal to take out monsters of floor 6.

Because my first strike was so weak, the monster was still not down after taking second attack.

Celibacy Strike is weaker than even a normal attack, it seems.

If you use a powerful skill, it might even be possible to one-hit monsters of floor 6. To think I added one more job slot and increased my jobs to 6 only to test out Sex Maniac job — Aweful.

Perhaps there are conditions of its use?

Perhaps you have to make a live sacrifice on 7th day every month to make it work?

I'll try Celibacy Strike one more time. If it's same as last time, it really is a pathetic skill.

I take my stance in the mean time.

For now, I'll use a normal attack of Durandal to finish this Mino off.

The monster falls, turns into smoke, and disappears.

Leaving pelt behind.

"Come to think of it, Sherry must have picked up pelt before."

I ask Sherry casually when I see pelt.

"I did not. In the labyrinth I entered before, Mino is a monster that appears on higher floors."

Oh, that was unexpected.

Earlier, by picking up leaf – raw material used in making poison antidote pill – I acquired Herbalist job, which can produce poison antidote pills.

Perhaps Master Smith job can be acquired by picking up raw materials used in making equipment?

“Please pick it up.”

“Yes.”

Nervously, I take a peek at Roxanne’s face for her expression.

She might get angry for not asking her.

Well, it’s not like there’s a change in practice.

Until now, she has never picked up dropped items, nor she expressly asked for it.

I have all the dropped items in my Item Box.

When master and slave both have Item Box, it’s normal for master to use his Item Box.

It’s alright to use backpack though. Unlike Item Box, items can not be misappropriated from backpack.

If Sherry were to use her Item Box, she would find out that she’s not an Explorer.

I receive pelt from Sherry, put away my Durandal, and open up party job settings interface to check Sherry’s jobs out.

No luck.

Picking up pelt does not seem to be the condition for acquiring Master Smith job.

Picking up pelt is not recognized as an ability, it seems, unlike picking up medicinal plants.

“I haven’t sold any pelt I got so far. Let’s have someone make better equipment out of it later on.”

“Umm… I’m sorry. If that’s the case, I had a Master Smith teacher.”

I say that casually, but Sherry apologizes to me.

No, no, I didn’t mean it like that.

But it can be interpreted as such.

I can’t be careless about what I say.

It seems people who stand above others have limitations of their own.

“Speaking of which, there is an exception to the condition that you must not be over Lv10 Explorer to become a Master Smith. What is that exception?”

I try to gloss over what I said before.

“The Temple of Elen.”

“Elen?”

“Unlike guilds, that only assign corresponding jobs, the Temple of Elen can assign any job by way of oracle. The job is one in which the person is most apt at.”

Roxanne explains.

In this world, if you need to change your job, you have to visit guilds or the Temple. In a guild, you can change your job only to the profession that the guild belongs to.

Merchant guild for Merchant job, Explorer guild for Explorer job, and so on.

In the Temple, however, you can change to a random job.

“I see. Thank you.”

No, not random. The job a person is assigned is based largely on merit.

My question is, can I only change to a job I have already acquired? or I can be assigned a job I haven’t acquired yet?

Guilds can only change to those jobs that have already been acquired. Is the Temple of Elen the same?

“The first emperor’s job, Hero, was assigned by the Temple of Elen.”

“Well, did the first emperor save some village from bandit attack at some point?”

“Yes, the first emperor’s first battle was to suppress bandits.”

Affirms Sherry.

Bingo!

Getting rid of thieves is the condition for obtaining Hero job.

It’s possible that it only needs you to repel them, not kill.

It was first battle for me as well.

In this world, you first undertake training by killing monsters, before attacking thieves. It is quite rare to go and attack thieves without any prior training.

For this reason, Hero job is extremely rare.

The first emperor, whose first battle was to suppress thieves, acquired Hero job.

It was not the Temple of Elen that assigned Hero job to the first emperor. The Temple of Elen only changed the job to one that the first emperor had already acquired.

Even if I take Sherry to the Temple of Elen, it is highly unlikely for her to get assigned Master Smith job, because she hasn't acquired it yet.

"Would Sherry be happy if she becomes Master Smith?"

"N-No."

"Is that so?"

I don't think it is so.

Sherry is looking at the ground.

And then, she somehow manages to get these words out of her mouth.

"Because I have already given up."

Don't give up! You… Don't you give up!

Chapter 53 - Wipe Out

Apparently, Sherry has given up on becoming Master Smith.
I need to somehow raise her spirit. What should I do?

“Even if I become a Master Smith, it will only add to your troubles now that I’m already a slave.”

Huh? What was that about?
So a slave becoming a Master Smith is considered troublesome?
And because I’m pushing her to acquire Master Smith job, I might end up looking suspicious.

“Come on, don’t worry. I’ll manage it somehow, if it comes to that.”

So don’t say something like that.
Sherry is worried about causing trouble to me, if she becomes a Master Smith.
So I can’t be selfish now. I must not push it any further.

“If master says it’ll be alright, it’ll be alright. There won’t be any problem.”
“Okay.”

Roxanne tries to encourage her as well.
I wonder where this faith of hers is coming from.
But that’s right, I will certainly take care of it.

“Well then, let’s get done with floor 6 and move on to floor 7. I’ll be wiping out the monsters. Sherry will not take part in the attack. You will coordinate with Roxanne, and focus on defending and dodging.”

Monsters on floor 6 can not be killed in one blow by a Villager Lv4.
Having confirmed that, we proceed to floor 7.
Because we have been going to floor 7 as of late, we have the floor map with us.

I open up bonus points distribution interface, and allocate points toward increasing Gained Experience option.
Increased experience is equally distributed among all party members.
It’ll help Sherry in leveling up quickly.
At the same time, I lower Crystallization Speed option. Quick earning is not

our objective for now.

Required Experience 1/10th 31 points, Gained Experience 20x 63 points, Crystallization Speed 16x 15 points, 5th Job 15 points , Incantation Omission 3 points, MP Recovery Speed, Appraisal, Job Settings, Character Reset 4 points. Total 131 points.

I reduce jobs back to 5, and cancel Sex Maniac.
Although I want to select Cook job, for the monsters here on floor 7 of Quratar town labyrinth being Slow Rabbits, Plating of Alchemist is indispensable.

“Sherry, approach from near the wall.”
“Okay.”

Coordinating with each other, Roxanne and Sherry proceed per map.
Three monsters appear. Roxanne takes on two of them while Sherry takes on one.
There’s nothing for me to do here.
However, because there are monster groups of four on floor 8, we can’t move on further up for now.

Against lone monsters or groups of two, Roxanne engages them from the front while Sherry attacks them from the side.
Although spear would be better for situations such as this, it is difficult to change the weapon one is used to, so she’s still sticking to using hammer.

“I’m getting used to it somewhat.”
“Yes, the more we spend time cooperating, the better it will get. I look forward to it, Sherry.”
“I should be the one saying that. I look forward to it.”

Actually, it’s more comfortable being rearguard compared to vanguard.
Because vanguard has to slash, stab, and hit from the front.
The workload of both is uneven. Vanguard’s is more.

Every mistake is painful, for you receive enemy’s attack.
If you’re not skilled enough, you might even die.
There’s an enormous pressure from the responsibility of guarding the party.
Being vanguard is really difficult.

Rearguard is not burdened with all that.
If I'm in the rear, and there's no danger of getting completely wiped out, I might even go to the top floor of the labyrinth.
But there might be a strong monster there that attacks entire party at the same time with its magic.

If I go to buy a slave vanguard, even the Slave Merchant would be reluctant, for its scary capturing one.
No matter how much I'm grateful to Roxanne, it's not enough.

"Roxanne, thank you so much."
"Yes…?"
"By the way, does Sherry know about various types of magic?"

Turning away from Roxanne, who is still confused, I ask Sherry.

"I don't know the details of Wizard job, but there are three standard types of magic. Area of Effect attack magic, single target attack magic, and defence magic."

Storm, Ball, and Wall are three different types of magic.
So I couldn't cast fourth type of magic because there wasn't any?

"Master, the sun will be up soon."

After Roxanne says that, we continue with the exploration.
Roxanne's body clock is pretty accurate.
Because I have been dependent on clocks all my life, I lose track of it many a time.
Especially when exploring floors, like now.

Status of early morning exploration so far.
I open up party job settings interface, and check Sherry's jobs out.

Villager Lv5, Explorer Lv10, Herbalist Lv1, Warrior Lv1, Merchant Lv1, Shrine Maiden Lv1, Swordsman Lv1, Monk lv1 (TL: I wanted to use Shaman instead of Shrine Maiden, but it would be mentioned later in the chapter that this job is female-only, so I went with Shrine Maiden.)

Villager job is up to Lv5 now.
But there's still no Master Smith job.
Was Villager Lv5 not one of the conditions?

But for Warrior and other jobs, Villager Lv5 was the condition, it seems.

“What? There’s such a job as Shrine Maiden?”

Oops.
I inadvertently say it out loud.

“…”

Sherry looks at me somewhat sad.
Roxanne’s expression was contrastingly warm.
What? Am I a pitiable child now?

Damn it! Not again.
Not the same mistake again.
To people around me, I might look like some crazy guy saying weird things.

Without any delay, I call for Warp in my mind, and escape to Adventurer Guild of Quratar town.
Because we need to buy bread for breakfast, I didn’t warp directly to our home.

“Sherry, has your hair always been like that?”

We return home and take our equipment off.
When Sherry takes her cap off, her hair was strangely soft.
It look more fluffy now.
It look light.

“That’s right, it seems to be more in volume than yesterday.”

Roxanne’s hand reaches out for Sherry’s hair.

“Is that so?”
“Ah, it’s so soft.”
“Thank you.”
“Master, it’s so soft.”

I noticed it when I washed her hair last night.

“Can I touch it?”
“Yes, please.”

Having received Sherry's acknowledgment, I first caress Roxanne's head gently.
I don't want to make same mistake a second time.
Order is absolute.

"Ah～"

When I place my hand on Roxanne's head, she gets bashfully delighted.
Cute.
Touching Roxanne feels so good.
Perks of living in this world.

While my right hand is caressing Roxanne's head, I place my left hand on Sherry's head.
So fluffy.

"Oh, it really is soft. Your hair is so good."
"Th-Thank you."

Last night, it felt more stiff.
I wonder if it became light after having been washed last night.
If so, how long has she been amassing dust in her hair?
Perhaps she never washed her head since she was born.

Now that I think about it, Roxanne's ears feel more fluffy puffy as well.
Before breakfast, I took my time playing with Roxanne's ears and Sherry's hair.

"By the way, is there any job called Shrine Maiden?"

During breakfast, I bring up the topic of Shrine Maiden.
It should be fine now to talk about it.

"…"

Although I thought it was fine to talk about it, Sherry is looking down with a sad expression on her face.

"Ah, no, I suddenly remembered something from a while back."
"What I said back in the labyrinth?"
"No, no. It's different."

“…”
“No, no, no.”

Even going to the extent of reacting like that?

“Because I failed to become a Master Smith, I wanted to be a Shrine Maiden. But…”

Sherry tells us in a low voice.
She is still looking down.

I get it now.
I get what you want to say.

She didn’t have Shrine Maiden job until a while ago.
So she can’t expect herself to be a Shrine Maiden.
Because she couldn’t become a Master Smith, she wanted to be a Shrine Maiden. But she failed even at that.
The shock would indeed be great.
To apply for a university twice, and fail both times.

“Oh, come on, there’s no need to be so sad.”

Most probably her Villager level was not enough at that time.

“Yes. Because I can work as an Explorer, it’s alright.”

Sherry says that and lifts her head up.
Actually, she’s not even an Explorer right now.
But this positivity is much appreciated.

Shrine Maiden Lv1
Effects: Small Increase in MP Slight Increase in Intelligence
Skill: Group Healing

“Hmm? This shrine maiden skill-”
“…”
“…Do you know about it?”

Oh shit!
I almost stepped on a landmine again.
Anyway, talking about Shrine Maiden skill.

It's not ordinary Healing, but Group Healing.
A Shrine Maiden can heal entire party.

"Recovery magic."
"So it's female version of Monk."

From the sound of it, Shrine Maiden is a female-only job.
Actually, it would be funny if men could become Shrine Maiden.

"Male version of Shrine Maiden is Priest."

Now that I think about it, Roxanne has Monk job, even though she's a female.
Sherry has both Monk and Shrine Maiden jobs.

So a Priest can heal whole party while a Monk can heal only an individual.
However, healing an entire party should require considerable expenditure of MP. Full recovery of MP should be slow, which might be a downside of this job.
Currently, there's no monster that uses Area of Effect attacks, so Monk should be enough.

"How can a male become a Priest, and a female become a Shrine Maiden?"
"By severing ties. I-I couldnt."

Indeed.

"Lets me guess… to get something you desire, let go of something you have."
"I went to Holy Orders Guild. Then I traveled to sacred grounds to undertake isolation training of striking through waterfall."
"Striking through waterfall?"
"It is believed that when you strike through waterfall, your body and soul unify. In that moment of unification, appears a momentary flash of enlightenment. In order to gain enlightenment, I traveled all the way to the waterfall in sacred grounds, but…"

Sherry averts her eyes.
No, she did gain enlightenment, for she has Shrine Maiden job now.

"But it's alright. I have heard that only half of the applicants succeed in becoming Shrine Maiden. Even if I'm not a Shrine Maiden, there shouldn't be any problem in exploring labyrinth."

“Of course, there’s no problem.”
“Okay.”

Roxanne is comforting her as well.

“Still, they should mention at the time of application that you have to be Villager Lv5 or above.”
“Yes?”
“No, nothing.”

Even if you travel all the way to the waterfall. Even if you undertake isolation training. Even if you unify your body and soul, and gain enlightenment. If you’re not Villager Lv5, you won’t be able to acquire Shrine Maiden job.
The tragedy like Sherry’s can be avoided, if they apply condition of Villager Lv5 or above at the time of application.

“…”
“Master, you might not know because you’re an Explorer, but there’s no such thing as level in other jobs, unlike Explorer.”

Because Sherry fell silent, seemingly troubled, Roxanne explains to me.

“Eh? Is that so?”
“Yes.”
“The more experience an Explorer gains, the bigger his Item Box gets. That indicates his level. However, there’s no such indicator for other jobs, not to mention Villager.”

In my case, when I started in the village, I was Villager Lv1.
Now that I think about it, the only way of knowing level is through using Appraisal and Job Settings.
That, however, is not accessible to other people.
Even Intelligence Card mentions only first job. There’s no indication of level on it.
In this world, level is an unknown.

“I see. So it was like that.”
“I-It’s alright. Even though master didn’t know that, he did great in the labyrinth, so there’s no problem.”
“Exactly, there’s no problem at all.”

I'm being cheered up. Strange indeed.
I hadn't heard much about things like level from other people, but I didn't feel anything out of place.
I never imagined it to be like that.

"Master will remain master, even if you don't know a thing or two."
"Even if a great scholar were to live a few years in a cask, there would be some things he wouldn't know when he comes out."

How can this be considered cheering up?

"W-Well then, let's continue with exploration of floor 7 of the labyrinth after this."

Damn it!
Are they disappointed that their master is a child at mind?

Exploration of floor 7 of Vale town labyrinth proceeded smoothly.
Because we are still not confident, albeit subconsciously, we are still not moving on to floor 8.
After spending all morning in exploration of floor 7, the first thing we do in the afternoon is arrive at the boss room.

Because Sherry planned to go shopping in the afternoon, to buy some stuff for her personal use, we had to speed up our exploration.
If we clear floor 7 now, we will move on to floor 8 tomorrow morning.

There are several people waiting next to the boss room.
A party seems to be in the middle of the battle.
Although there are relatively less people in Vale town labyrinth, it doesn't mean there are no people at all.
The boss battle is taking long.
Because it's daytime, there are many people, it seems.

Next to the boss room, there are six people in waiting. All men. Are they all one party?

I try to judge them from the look in their eyes.
Their eyes were clearly on Roxanne.
Filled with obvious, lecherous look.

Th-These guys!

Should I turn them all into Durandal's rust at this very spot?

But before it could happen, the ongoing boss battle finishes.
The door to the boss room opens.
After having one last, long look at Roxanne, those men enter the boss room.

"Bastards!"
"They were all one party after all."

Sherry and I both are feeling disgusted.

Not just Roxanne, they were also staring at Sherry's chest.
I assure you, I won't let it go just like that.

"Such filthy looking eyes."

Roxanne finally speaks.
Of course, it's not possible for her to not notice it.
But then, does she also notice the look in my eyes?

"Never mind."
"Okay."

Putting Durandal away, I take Recovery Pills out, and pass on to Roxanne and Sherry for emergency situations.
Also, I give a Copper Spear to Sherry.

"It would be better to use spear this time."
"Umm… is this for boss battle?"
"It indeed is."
"This floor's boss is Pan, a boss level Escape Goat. Pan is a magic using half-human half-goat. Its magic is considerably strong. Roxanne-san should attack it from close range, and dodge its attacks. Its weakness is its head. It's considered fairly strong within lower floors. Previous party must have had skill type weapons too, I believe. Normally, it's better to use skill type weapons with Incantation Delay skill when fighting against Pan."

Sherry lectures me and I nod.

I see.
It's effective to gather information before fighting a monster.
It really helps.

Although the floor they appear on may differ from one labyrinth to another, same monsters appear in different labyrinths. So it's easy to gather information on monsters, even if the labyrinth is relatively new.

However, we never gathered any information on monsters.

Oh well, it can't be helped.
Because I don't want to disclose any information to others.
If you use radar to trace enemy, the enemy can use that to trace back your position.
When you can't tell your left from your right, it's useless to know what's on your right.

"It's great that you know about monsters. I knew Sherry would be a great help."
"Th-Thank you."
"I'll be relying on you, please take care of me."

I'll ask Sherry to collect information from now on. It seems quite useful.

"Yes."
"It's alright though, because we have a weapon with Incantation Interruption skill."

I show her Durandal.

"Didn't this sword have MP Absorption skill?"
"It has Incantation Interruption skill too."
"…"

I withdraw it while answering.
Sherry first looks at me, then looks at the sword, frightened.

Her gaze intensifies.
I'm afraid it might become a habit.

"I-Is there something wrong?"
"Umm… I know it's not impossible for a weapon to have multiple skills attached, but to see one in real, that's…"
"Is it rare?"
"When fusion of a monster card with a normal weapon fails, the weapon disintegrates into raw materials. However, when fusion of a monster card

with a skill type weapon fails, previously fused monster card is completely lost."

If fusing a monster card with a weapon that already has a skill attached to it fails, the card that was first fused with the weapon is lost, and the weapon disintegrates into raw materials.

Fusion of a monster card with a weapon results mostly in failure.
And if you successfully attach a skill to your weapon, you will not take an even bigger risk for a second skill.
Therefore, not many people try to get more than one skills.

Such a risk can only be assumed by a great challenger, who can afford such a big loss.
If you try otherwise, you're an utter fool.
Her eyes carry such kind of expression
Because I would try it, if there's a Master Smith who is acquainted with Sherry, who can be trusted.

"Oh, the door is open now. Let's go."

Because the door to the boss room has finally opened, I decide to escape from this situation.
This is first time someone is escaping to the boss room.
I'm sure no one will experience such a thing.

"Very well."
"Okay."

With the door now open, I rush into the boss room.

"Woah!"

When I'm in, I let out a surprised voice.
Equipment are scattered all around in the boss room.
On one side, there are swords and armors piled up on the ground.
There are gauntlets and boots too, about 20 pairs.

In the middle of that pile of equipment is someone, looking not much different from a beast, standing on two feet, just like a human.
A human?

It glances our way and scowls at us.
It looks like a human wearing a mask. An eerie face.
With two ominous horns growing on its head.

Pan Lv7
Half-human half-beast. A monster with legs and horns of a goat.

The boss moves out of the pile, and the equipment around it roll away.
It means the party that went in before us has been completely wiped out by the boss.

Chapter 54 - Beast Attack

Equipment was scattered all over the boss room on Vale Labyrinths seventh floor.
This probably means that the parties who wore this equipment have been wiped out.
Were those men who had been indecently looking at Roxanne annihilated?
You could say they got divine punishment for their actions.

“Roxanne take the front. Sherry move the equipment out of the way.”
“Yes.”

The fight has already begun.
I can’t get too distracted focusing on the area.
I give some quick instructions.

I push the thoughts about the men who died here into the back of my mind.
It’s not something I need to worry about anyway.

It’s understandable that someone would die on the battlefield if their thoughts were too focused on the opposite sex.
Even I make an effort while I’m in the Labyrinth to not focus too much on Roxanne’s chest.
A very serious effort.

For now, it won’t be easy to fight with equipment lying around our feet.
Something needs to be done about it.
It’s likely that someone would trip at a crucial time.

I move around to the demons side & kick a gauntlet and some boots towards the wall as I move.
Roxanne takes up a position in front of the demon.
Sherry moves a sword that belonged to the previous party towards the wall.
There’s some dangerous things lying around.

A red magic formation appears at Pan’s feet.
It happened immediately?
According to Sherry, Pan uses some strong magic.

I raise Durandal and jump at the demons chest.
One cut from it's upper right.
From the half-man's shoulder to it's waist in an exaggerated strike.

"That? A single strike?"

Pan collapsed after being struck by Durandal.
The demon just fell down.

"It seems so."

The half-man, half goat becomes smoke and disappears.
It seems it really was a single blow.
Huh?
Weak.
No matter what, there's no way I would have thought it would be weaker than an escape goat.

Goat Meat.

It dropped Goat Meat.
Is that really the dropped item of a half-man?
The reality of it doesn't make much sense.
We got an ingredient for dinner.

"It seems to have annihilated the previous party. Maybe it's physical strength was worn down by them."

Sherry brings over the sword that belonged to the previous party.
Pan didn't appear after we entered the boss room. He was already there.
It seems if the previous party is annihilated, the boss fight continues. It doesn't start from scratch.
Damage suffered from the previous party is still there.

"Hmm, so that's how it is."
"It seems that indecent party was wiped out."

Roxanne mutters with hostility.
Sherry mutters "people who judge someone from the size of their chest should die", but I want to pretend I didn't hear it.

Because it's scary.
I took the sword.

Bronze sword of Obstruction. Two-handed. Skill: Incantation delay.

"They even went to the trouble of preparing a weapon with [Incantation Delay]."
"You can tell just by looking at it?"

Sherry looks up at me.

"Well…"
"Oh, did you possibly use [Weapon Analyze] without the incantation?"

I was going to proudly confirm it, but the gaze goes away.
Sure I have the weapon merchant job, but…
Aren't you surprised anymore?
Damn.

"As expected of Master."

Yes.
Roxanne is my oasis.
A man needs a little admiration.

"If we attack with weapons that have [incantation delay] then enemies magic will be delayed."
"Yes, but weren't you able to cancel it?"

Sherry takes the Bronze Sword of Obstruction again.
There are five Bronze Swords of Obstruction.
There's also another Wand.
Was one of the six a monk or a priest? Or maybe a wizard?
I forgot to use [Analyze] because I got angry at the looks they gave Roxanne.

"Wasn't five people enough?"
"I don't know."

They got it to the stage where I could defeat it with Durandal in a single blow.
Things probably went well for the first half.

Was there an accident? Couldn't five people finish it without having Pan's magic go off?
With five people attacking in succession, wouldn't it have been fine?
When one person was defeated things probably became chaotic.

I became a little sad imagining it.

"When you rely on information and strategy too much, things can collapse if one piece doesn't fall into place. It is important to steadily increase in ability."
"Yes. I'll do my best, Master."

I don't need to say it to Roxanne.

"That might be so."

The top-heavy person nods as well.

"Do remains disappear?"
"People defeated by the labyrinth are absorbed and digested quickly."

After the sword, Sherry brings the gauntlet I kicked about.
It's what I expect from a Labyrinth that lures in people as food.

"Equipment can't be digested?"
"It's a foreign substance to the Labyrinth."
"Is that so."
"It would get vomited out sooner or later."

That reminds me, the equipment of dead people become treasure chests.
It's definitely a foreign substance if it gets vomited out later as a treasure chest.

"I see."
"Since it's a foreign substance, it can take a while to absorb."

Since it takes a while, that means that the next party against the boss can pick it up?

“Wearing too much equipment from dead people doesn’t seem like a good idea though.”

The previous party had mainly focused on weapons with skills, so there isn’t really any better armor.
At the most there is leather gloves and shoes.

“The equipment from the defeated party goes to the next party. I’ll give it all some maintenance when we get home so it will be fine.”

Roxanne is always persistent about maintenance.
Are you fine now that Roxanne has said it will be alright?

There are several leather armors amongst the protective gear, but I’m the only one who wears that.

“What is it?”
“Is selling it the only thing we can do with the leather armor”

I didn’t say anything.
I don’t think I said anything.
I was just staring at the leather armor.
“Very small.” mutters Sherry with her paranoid complex.

There were also six magic crystals.
One was red, one was blue, and the rest are purple.
They don’t seem to have defeated many demons.
I put all the equipment into my item box and we leave the boss room.

“We started that fight half way, do we need to fight it again?”
“I think we could use the experience.”
“I think so too, I would like to fight it again to learn Pan’s attack patterns.”

I said too much, so I was roped into it.
It’s not possible to walk straight back into the boss room, so after exiting to the 8th floor, I use [Dungeon walk] to return to one of the small rooms on the 7th floor.

It seems I can't go straight to the boss's waiting room.
I have a feeling that [Warp] could go there, but it would be bad if someone was there & saw.

"Aside from that magic attack, Pan didn't seem to have any weapons. I'd like to try using my skill. Is that alright Master?"

Roxanne asks before entering the boss room.
Was a beast warriors skill beast attack?

I always have Roxanne take the front when fighting demons.
It's difficult to do other things while using an incantation, so it would be hard to use a skill while facing the demon from the front.

"That's fine. Sherry, can you try and handle Pan from the front?"
"I'll try my best."

Sherry nods.
Will it be alright?

"When the incantation begins, I'll cancel it. Roxanne use that chance to use your skill."
"Thank you."

She has the skill, so it should be usable.
It might be useful in an emergency.
It will be good to test it out in actual combat.
Since Pan uses a magic attack, it's a good chance.

"I think we're ready. Let's go."

The door opened, and we entered the boss room.
Sherry takes the front, and we surround the boss from three sides.
Sherry attacks with her club, and I follow up with Durandal from a rear angle.
It seems it won't be defeated in a single blow.

"warriors of the beasts xx? Unleash the united power of xxxx, beast attack."

Roxanne also recites a skill, and attacks with the scimitar.
She hesitates a bit, and part of it isn't translated.
Even though the attack hit, it didn't seem like anything out of the ordinary.
It's likely that she didn't succeed.

"I don't think it worked."
"It's a failure. The brahim language is difficult."
"Try again. Read it aloud nice and slow."

I move around the back of Pan, closer to Roxanne.
The incantation sentence is sure to have appeared in her mind.

"warriors of the beasts of amaraha? xx. Oh, I understand it. The power of eighty is unleashed."
"What's amaraha?"

The mistakes aren't translated.
Roxanne already corrected one part herself.
A red magic circle appears beneath Pan's feet, and I slash at him with Durandal.

"Amaraha, amarama, araraha, it's ugly."
"Ugly?"
"Something like that."

Roxanne translates it as ugly.

"Ugly?"
"There are no warriors of the beasts of ugly."

Is it translated accidentally?
Is it similar to another word?
I think about it while watching for the magic formation.
TN: While fucking around, our Villager Lv5 tank is killed.

"Maybe not ugly, but ugliness."
"Amuraha?"
"Ugliness."
"Ugliness?"

Roxanne repeats my brahim word.
I'm not sure, but the mistake might be gone because it's been translated.

"In the olden times, it had a meaning of strength."

The magic formation appears again, and I cancel it while explaining.
Though I'm not sure I'm right.
It's the brahim language.

"Ugliness?"
"Are you familiar with the word?"

Sherry dodges a punch from the demon as I'm asking.
Aside from magic, Pan really isn't much of a problem.
His physical power isn't a worry.

"Well, maybe."

It might be good since it was translated.

"warriors of the beasts of ugliness? With the united power of eighty, beast attack."
TN: The original for ugliness was 醜, which doesn't have any useful other meanings that I know of, so I left it as ugliness even though it just doesn't sound right.

Roxanne revises the incantation for the skill with my advice.
There's still a question halfway through it though.
She makes an attack similar to the first one, so it seems to have failed again.

Another red magic formation appears, so I slash again with Durandal.
Roxanne recites it again, but it ends with a similar outcome.
It seems to be useless as a question.
warrior? Asking it might have no chance of succeeding.

"How is it?"
"I think it's another failure. The brahim language is difficult."
"It's understandable since it's in brahim."

Sherry tries to cheer her up.

“Your sure it’s warrior? How about warrior?” TN: The first is senshi, the second is mononofu, both of which mean warrior.

I suggest something while I swing Durandal.
TN: no good clue on this:ちはやぶる神、たらちねの母。
TN: or this 八十 にかかる枕詞がもののふのだったはずだ。

“Warrior?”
“It’s an older word for Warrior.”

Sherry seems to know about it.

“Ah, I understand, I’ll try it.”

Roxanne does the incantation again.

“warriors of the beasts of ugliness, with the united power of eighty, beast attack.”

Roxanne drives the scimitar into Pan.
The swords speed is several times faster than normal.
It’s literally a power of driving it into something.
The scimitar cuts into Pan.
Pan has a meaty gash in him.

“Ohh!”
“I did it, it’s a success.”
“It’s amazing.”

It’s a single blow that can surely take a life.
The momentum and power is totally different.
It’s a success with no problems.

Probably because of our offensive, a red magic formation appears at Pan’s feet.
I can’t miss it.
I cut it again with Durandal.

Pan is defeated by the blow.
He collapses on the floor.
Before long, he becomes smoke and disappears.

“We did that spectacularly.”
“Thank you so much, Master.”
“Well done.”

I slashed it with Durandal many times, and I don’t think the beast attack had much difference in power compared to Durandal.
Maybe the same, or double at best.
It’s still quite good for the scimitar to be able to match Durandal in power though.
I’m not sure how often we’ll be able to use it however, as Roxanne is normally fighting demons head on, but it will be useful for something.

“Roxanne is amazing.”
“Thank you, Sherry.”

Roxanne and Sherry share the joy.

Sherry picks up the dropped item.
She passes it to me.
It will be dinner for tomorrow.

“It’s amazing that you know such an old expression.”
“Master’s brahim is amazing. As expected of Master.”

Does Sherry think of me the same way Roxanne does a little?
I can use the brahim language, but saying that I know it isn’t really correct.

“To finish it so quickly even though it’s the seventh floor boss… I didn’t get much chance to learn Pan’s movements.”

After hearing the complaint, maybe it’s impossible to get respect?
Ignoring Sherry, we go to the eighth floor.
We’ll be fighting up to four demons at once here.

“As usual, lets try to start with somewhere with a small amount of demons.”
“Yes… that way, there’s a Collagen Coral.”

After issuing instructions, Roxanne points straight away after sniffing out an area with few enemies.
The demon on Vale Labyrinth's eighth floor seems to be the Collagen Coral.

"So it's the Collagen Coral?"
"Um, you can ask the explorer at the entrance which demons appear on which floor, or you could go to the nearest explorers guild, or the explorers guild in Quratar."
"Oh, I guess we could."

Sherry gives advice, but there's no point just knowing the type without experiencing it.
What's it's weak point? What attacks does it do? How should I deal with it? Those are the things that matter.
If it's a demon we've fought previously, we can deal with it straight away. If it's a demon we've never fought then just the name doesn't help us.
At least so far.

"Um…"
"From now on, I'll leave learning these things to Sherry."

I leave the problem to Sherry and she has an amazed expression.
This should be fine.

"I'd be happy to."

Sherry nods with a determined expression.
Her eyes look odd, so I hope the expression won't become a habit.

"The problem will be when four demons appear."
"Yes. Will Sherry take one while I take three? Or two each? Or Master one, Sherry one, and two for me?"
"I'd like to try half, is that alright?"

As I think about the new situation, Sherry makes a suggestion.

Chapter 55 – Master Smith

We advance to the 8th floor of Vail's labyrinth.
From the 8th floor, the monsters will come out in groups of up to 4.
When I think about dealing with that, Sherry makes a proposal.

"What is it?"
"Because the weapon I am wielding is a hammer, I can strike several monsters simultaneously. Roxanne can handle 2 monsters and it should be possible for me to handle 2 as well."

I did not know that.
Was there such an advantage with a hammer?
If we have two people as vanguard then I am at ease.
Even then one must deal with it by adapting depending on the opponent.

"I see. Is it fine to try to attempt it immediately?"
"It will be useful when there is a crowd of monsters, so whenever possible when 4 come out I would like to try it.""
"I understand. Then for now we will do as Sherry says."

First to come out was a Collagen Coral Lv8 which went down in 5 magic hits without a problem.

There are lv 7 Collagen Corals to fight in Quartar labyrinth.
In this world's labyrinths, being unable to deal with monsters getting tougher just by going up 1 floor shouldn't be the case.
I haven't collected enough information on it.

Next Roxanne found a group of three monsters, and after that was a group of 4.
Like usual I had requested for Roxanne to lead the way to the nearest monsters.

Collagen Coral Lv8

Collagen Coral Lv8

Escape Goat Lv8

Naive Olive Lv8

Escape Goat is a bit troublesome but it can't be helped.

"Roxanne on Escape Goat and Naive Olive. I entrust to Sherry the 2 Collagen Corals on the left."

I issue instruction, then start off with 2 [Fire Storms].
The escape goat will try and escape if I use a third shot.

The two vanguards confront the monsters.
Sherry swings the club from the left.
She swung her club, however, it hit the round body of Collagen Coral, and then it stopped there.
The Collagen Coral who avoided getting hit throws itself ramming Sherry.

"Simply just swinging seems pointless."
"Is it difficult?"

It is not possible to attack several monsters simply just by swinging.
It hits one then it stops.
In order to attack 2 with one swing, perhaps you only graze the first one?

"Is it useless if I don't swing hard enough to knock one out of the way?"

Such thing happens.

"Or since the impact of the hit is being absorbed, should I just graze 1st monster."

I used healing and put [Plating] back on.
I cast a third [FireStorm].
Escape Goat begins to retreat.

This is a chance.
They don't seem to reverse well when 4 are lined up in a line.
Because Roxanne suppresses the front skilfully they can't break through.
Because of that it would take time to escape.

By the time the retreating Escape Goat turned around I launched the fourth shot.
Sherry swung her club once again.
She hits the first Collagen Coral, the trajectory greatly changes and misses the second one.
Therefore again she receives attack from the second one.

Because the Escape Goat is escaping, I don't replace [Plating] and instead shot a 5th [FireStorm].
With this everything is sure to go down.
The sparks dance, the monsters die.
Before Sherry's next attack struck, all the monsters were defeated.

"It is difficult to graze them."
"What to do? If it seems impossible, we can consider other formations."

I ask while using healing and [Plating].

"Please let me do a bit more. Because I feel like I can somehow do it."
"Is that so."
"It should be alright"

When I look at Roxanne for confirmation, she nodded.

"Got it. Well then we will continue as it is. Roxanne's current position was good."
"Thank you very much"

Sherry while muttering things like "more like this" is practising club swings.
It is close to baseball bat swings.
In one swing striking 2 or more enemies, is it natural to swing horizontally?

She swings the club from the left for practice.
Is Sherry left-handed batter?

"Aren't the positions of the hands reversed?"
"Reversed?"

A left-handed batter's left hand is positioned on top.
Sherry holds the club with her right hand on the top.
A grip which is usually used for holding a sword.

"If you grasp like that to swing, then you can swinging smoothly from the right."

When in kendo, left-handers had right hand on top.
But I don't know why.
In case of baseball, left batter's left hand is on top.
I also don't know why.

"Ah. It is true. This way it is easy to swing."

Sherry exchanged her hands and tried it several times.
Next I considered teaching her raised-foot stance, but I stopped myself.
It's a martial art for a single opponent, and may create openings against groups.

"But by looking at how it is held, you can work out if the attack will come from the right or the left."
"This is if the monster has that much intelligence"

I talked to Roxanne while watching Sherry's practice swings.
Sherry with right hand on top swings from the right then changes left hand to the top and swings from the left.

"I see. Does occasionally reversing swing direction make it difficult to be seen through?"
"There's benefits to using a hammer, so I think it can't be helped if they start to see through your movements."

Next we came across 3 monsters, 2 of which were defeated with Durandal, following that we came across four monsters.

"Let's go"
"Alright. Time to show some results."

While casting [FireStorm] I send off Sherry.
Because there was no Escape Goat in the group, I shot the monsters 3 times before they arrived.

Sherry stands in front of the monsters and swings fully the club.
The attack magnificently sends the first monster flying back and hits the second one.
Overbearing or rather forcibly with all her strength.

It won't work if you don't swing it strong enough?
Dwarves attack with alot of brute strength.
I think I understood the reason dwarves equip a hammer.

Is that the reason why dwarves equip a hammer?

"I did it"
"Great"

While praising Sherry I cast the fourth [FireStorm].
Followed by the fifth shot.
The four monsters fall.

After defeating the monsters, I think about [Party Job Settings] and look at Sherry's Jobs.
The reason dwarves equip a hammer.

Villager Lv9, Explorer Lv10, Herbalist Lv1, Warrior Lv1, Merchant Lv1, Shrine Maiden Lv1, Swordsman Lv1, Monk Lv1, Master Smith Lv1.

It's there.
That much overbearing skill and technique.
If the dwarf is not strong enough then I think it would be impossible.
In other words, no wonder you need to be a talented dwarf to do it.

[Master Smith] acquisition condition is to strike several monsters in one swing.
After having [Explorer] Lv10 (or more?). [Villager] Lv5 or more, there might be something else but I don't know.

Anyway, Sherry has obtained [Master Smith] Job.
With this Sherry can be [Master Smith].

Finally her desire of [Master Smith] has been obtained.

“Alright. Today’s exploration will stop here.”

I think advancing too much will burn us out.

“I think it is still early but”
“Well there are various things still to do.”
“Certainly.”

Aside from business, I have a feeling that continuing would be bad.
Also called “Lights are usually followed by shadows”. [Otka: this means that when things are going well something bad is bound to happen]
I don’t want to have my last words to be “Let’s do a bit more…”.
Todays exploration stopped, I think it is better to rest.

The labyrinth is never a safe place.
In front of us there was a completely crushed party of 6.

“Are we going to the merchant guild?”

Sherry asked.
Was there equipment with attached skills being auctioned by the Merchant Guild?
The crushed party have left behind 5 weapons with attached [Incantation Delay].

Sherry has become a [Master Smith], but the person herself dosen’t know it yet.
The usual tension.
Has it only become high for me?

“Yeah. Has Sherry used the auction?”
“No, I have not. Anyone can use the auction but they seem to often go through brokers.”
“Brokers? Well when we go and see I will understand”

Today's exploration is up to here, we jump to Quratar Adventurer Guild.
When we come out the sun has not set yet.

I ask about the location at the Adventurer Guild, then go to Merchant Guild to have a look.

"Brokers snatch away the profit, but it's difficult not to use them because they look out for each other I've been told."

Along the way to Merchant Guild, I heard the story from Sherry.
If there is a profit there, it can't be helped that people will go for it.
Brokers seem to be profiteers.

We arrive at the guild building and enter inside.
There are several people in the lobby.
Some people doing evaluations looked this way.
Their gazes aren't pleasant.

When we stopped, one man approached us.

Laurel man 31 years old
Sex Maniac Lv35
Equipment: Landslide Iron Sword, Lucky bracelet of Sacrifice.

[Sex Maniac].
First time I see one.

"I haven't seen your face before. Is it your first time here?"
"Yeah"

Because lying is pointless, I replied truthfully.

"I do brokering, call me Laurel. Will you hear what I have to say?"
"Only what you have to say?"
"If you don't particularly like it you may decline. Let's go to the other room."

The broker showed us inside the guild.

"Please wait a moment."

I turn to the two behind me.
I feel it would be bad to take these two to [Sex Maniac]'s room.
For beautiful Roxanne with big breasts and little, lovely Sherry.

"Roxanne and Sherry, go ahead of me to the clothes shop. Buy two sets each of top and bottom clothes for Sherry. Roxanne may also buy one outfit"
"Is that fine?"
"I don't mind. We ended up with some extra income."
"Thank you very much."

Anyway she can't only have one set.
I originally planned to buy Sherry's clothes soon.

The two went outside and I followed the broker.
He leads me to a room that only has a table and chairs.
Feels like a meeting room.

"This is a room where we may freely use to do things like business discussions."
"I see"

The broker went around the interior and sat on the chair.
I also sat down on the chair on this side.
If it is this side then it is possible to immediately run away.
There is no harm talking?

"Have you been with those two long?"
"Not really."
"You seem to be human. For humans it is a good job going into the labyrinths. How about you come to our guild?"

The talk is, invitation to [Sex Maniac] guild?
I lost my nervousness.
Well, if you see a human man leading two beauties then I get him noticing the condition, but…

"[Sex Maniac]?"
"What. Were you in the same trade?"

The broker leaned against a chair and looked at the sky.
I feel like looking up too.

“No, not yet in same trade. But I would like to hear about it to some extent.”
“What would you like to know?”
“Let’s see, regarding [Abstinence Attack]? How is it used?”

I will try asking about it during this opportunity.

“You know about it to that extent? I’m not really supposed to teach a non guild member.”
“I see.”

Skills seem to be a secret.
Society has a prejudice against strange jobs, so the group has to be strong.

“Well it’s probably fine. I enter the labyrinth once every 10 days. The Boss does not die in one hit but, it is a useful skill.”
“Is that so?”
“It’s horrible to practice abstinence for 10 days, but I’m married and normally work here, so it’s not bad.

[Sex Maniac] explained to me.
Based on the explanation, I assemble the pieces.

To do [Abstinence Attack] it seems abstinence is necessary.
The marriage is related.

“10 days is terrible”
“Well even in 2-3 days it has moderate power.”

When I agreed like a parrot, additional information came.

2-3 days moderate power, 10 days considerable damage on boss.
In other words, [Abstinence Attack] depending on the time of abstinence the attack power changes.
The longer amount of time I abstain, the more the attack power increases.
In my case since I hadn’t abstained long, so it was at that power.

The more I abstain the more attack power increases.
Of course, in order to accumulate abstinence I have to continue having [Sex Maniac] active.
[Vitality Increase] skill then is in effect.
[Sex Maniac]'s seething sexual desire accumulates into a mass.

Violent instincts due to [Vitality Increase] are suppressed by abstinence.
And releasing it all at once after it's accumulated over long time.
That becomes an amazing thing before long.

It is certainly an effective skill.
Effective skill without a doubt.
It is effective skill, but.

"Sorry but it seems difficult for me."

After all for me having unusable skill does not change anything.
Something like abstaining for 10 days in front of Roxanne and Sherry.
Is Impossible.

"Well, when there are beautiful companions… Even so, entering a guild while you're young is good. After all only a few live to grow old."

Internal energies are the energy source. Probably when Vitality declines, [Abstinence Attack]'s power decreases.
If only the intervals were the problem, then an old man with a declined sexual desire could use [Abstinence Attack] as much as he wants.

"Sorry"
"I see. Then did you come to the auction to buy or to sell?"

When refusing, the [Sex Maniac] easily withdrew.
Inviting me to the guild seemed to be a bonus.

"For now I want to hear about how things work from both sides."
"It is appropriate to go through brokers like us for purchases. Since you don't know when it will be exhibited. Since you don't have free time to stick around in the auction, right?"
"Certainly"

What or when there's an exhibited, there seems to be no system to let you know in advance.
You can't continue staying until a thing you desire shows up.
Therefore you place an order with a broker.

"In regards to sales it's also appropriate to hire a broker, as they can organize the timing of the sale. Because you can get more at certain times."

Since regular people don't know what is exhibited, and don't know the timings of when the customers want that.
There is a possibility of getting a bargain.

"I see."
"What would you like to buy?"
"Hmm. Kobold monster card."
"Kobold monster card? Please wait a moment."

The broker took out a note book from inside a handheld bag.
Brown, cheap note book. It's papyrus.

"Yesterday it appeared for 5,200 nars. Before that 5,400 nars. And before that on springs 20th day it was 5,200. And the day before that it also appeared for 5,200 nars."

I don't know about monster card value being 5 thousand and some nars but, since that is the market price I can only nod.
However, rather than it being the market price, someone might be putting purchase price to 5,200.
Monster card fusion often fails.
The person wanting it will keep buying until it succeeds.

"So that's how it is.""
"When I am broker, the commission is 500 nars. Because I also enter labyrinth I am fine with deferred payment. Other brokers ask for payment in advance normally."

If entering the labyrinth there is danger to his life.
If by chance the broker dies then the commission does not come back.
Therefore it is deferred payment?

“I see.”
“Please decided the highest bid value before doing the request. Since the guild puts up the auction results, we are reliable. Because of competing, it seldom drops below specified price.”

The broker made an unpleasant grin.
I heard from Sherry that the brokers cooperate.
It is easy.
You tell the highest bid to your colleagues and they compete up to that limit.

Since the seller is also a broker the profits can be divided.
Even if it is not dividing, you can help the sale.
If said other way round, if the customer who is not a broker is a seller then they can bring down the highest price.

Certainly it is difficult to circumvent the broker in the auction.

“I understand. But it seems now is a bad time.”
“Then how about selling. What would you like to sell?”
“There are 5 bronze swords of obstruction.”
“5? It is regrettable.”

The brokers face was a bit strained.
Well it might be bad timing to sell 5.

“Not good?”
“Bronze sword of obstruction is a weapon which is often used on low level bosses. Because there are 6 people in a party, a set of 6 sells for a lot. Can you hold on to it until you get one more? …”

The broker gets a considering look.
Seems to be calculating various things.

“Does it sell high if there are 6?”
“That’s right. For 5 bronze swords of obstruction I can give you 15,000 each. The winning bid might be 30,000 or more but only if they are auctioned one after the other. If it’s a set of 6 I can give you 100,000.”
“I see. It’s like that?”

Half the price.
Broker's share is large.
It's as Sherry's acquaintance said. Trying to circumvent to make a profit is difficult.

"What do you want to do?"
"I'll try to look for one more. Sorry for only hearing what you have to say."

I stretch and stand up.
Even if I do use a broker, one who exposes his skills is no good.
It's better to look for someone else.

Besides [Sex Maniac] job does not have the [Calc] skill.
As long as there is a possibility. there should be a merchant broker.
Though there is no 30% increase effect for auction itself.
One sword for 15,000 however if 30% increase effect 6 swords are 117,000 nars.

"Try to search for it somehow"
"I'm not sure if it's possible, but we'll see."

I don't feel like putting any effort into it.
I might put effort in if I'm able to make one to sell them for the better price.

Chapter 56 - Fusion

I left Merchant Guild, and went to the clothing store nearby.
Roxanne and Sherry were there together, buying clothes.
It felt great seeing them together like this.

“Sorry, I kept you waiting.”
“No, no, it’s fine.”

They don’t seem to have finished choosing yet.
Come on, at least Roxanne should’ve had finished shopping much earlier.
sigh
It can’t be helped.

“Is that so?”
“This one, or this one? Master, which one do you like?”

Roxanne approaches me with two tunics in her hands.
First one seems to be tight on body.

“Roxanne looks pretty in whatever she wears.”
“Th-Thank you.”

Because there was no helping it, I went along with it until they were done.

“Umm… is it alright?”
“Is it alright for you to buy us new clothes?”

When we were done shopping, Sherry asks.
Sherry bought dwarven clothing, of course. In this world, it is categorized same as childrenswear.
For this reason, there are many children outfits in clothing shops. Also, there are many that look identical to adult outfits.
If not for dwarven clothing, there won’t be these many children outfits around.

“It’s alright.”
“Thank you. Well, clothes that slaves wear are owner’s property after all.”

Sherry mumbles in a low voice.
Hey, that was an unnecessary thing to say.

“Umm… excuse me, is it okay to buy this one as well?”

Roxanne comes back hesitantly with one more.
I wish you learn some modesty from Sherry.
Rather than clothes, it was a piece of cloth. Red.
Loincloth?

“Is it necessary?”
“Umm… I’m sorry. I don’t want to stain my underwear.”

Although I don’t understand, it seems something necessary.

“Hmm? Fine then.”
“I’m sorry. Umm… there’s one more thing.”

Roxanne comes close to my ear.
There was more than just ‘I’m sorry.’

“What is it?”
“Umm… because ‘it’ has started, I won’t be able receive your affection tonight.”
Roxanne whispers in my ear.
‘It’ has started.
Period.
Is this piece of cloth a replacement for sanitary napkin?

Well, it can’t be helped. It’s blood after all.
It’s just that…
It’s just that I wanted to try Enhanced Vigor skill of Sex Maniac tonight. It seems I have to postpone it for the time being.

Oh well, there are other skills I want to try more than the skills of Sex Maniac.
Having returned home, after buying clothes and food ingredients, I ask Sherry to sit down across the table from me.

“What is it about?”
“Well, I wanted to tell you that…”
“Yes?”

That Sherry is a Master Smith.
How do I say it?
Why is it so difficult?

I guess I have to proceed with a frontal attack.
I mean I can’t work around from the sides this time.
I spit it all out in one breath.

“From now on, Sherry will be a Master Smith.”
“Wha-”

It was so sudden, Sherry’s mouth remained open.

“I thought you would be this shocked. I understand. To finally get what one has lost hope of getting is just so incredible.”
“U-Umm…”
“Even if becoming a Master Smith seems impossible, giving it up is just not right.”
“E-Err…”

I take out a Copper Sword and a Monster Card.

“You must be able to use it now. Fusion, that is. Try it.”
“N-No…”

I have no choice but to push her.

“Do it! You can do it! I know you can do it! You can absolutely do it! Just do it!”
“B-But…”
“It’s alright, I’ll help you. Repeat after me, ‘Monster Card Fusion.’ Repeat after Michio, ‘Monster Card Fusion.’”

I urge her to repeat the skill name after me.

“Monster Card Fusion?”

For some reason, it's Roxanne who repeats it.
No, not you, Roxanne.
It's no use if Roxanne does it.
Confused Roxanne looks so cute.

However, I don't know if it's because of Roxanne appearing, or because of me pushing her, but Sherry shows some motivation.

"Mo-Monster Card Fusion."

Quietly, in a low voice, she calls the skill name out.
The next instant, Sherry has her eyes opened wide.
Wide with surprise.

As for Sherry's job, I had changed it beforehand. She is Master Smith Lv1 now.
In that case, what happens if you call out the skill name?
Skill incantation appears in your mind.
Sherry looks at me with an expression of disbelief.

"You look even more hot."

I grasp Sherry's fist, and raise it high to announce her victory.

"B-But how…"
"You can change, if you have the will for it. Anyone can change, if they have the will for it. Let's try fusion now."

I hold out the Copper Sword and Rabbit Monster Card before Sherry.
All doubts can be put to rest, if there's proof.

"A-Are you fine with it?"
"It's fine."

This Copper Sword has an empty skill slot.
If my hypothesis is correct, this fusion has 100% chance of success.
Even if my hypothesis is off mark, it's alright. It can't be helped.
Well, there's a possibility of scam too, but…

But from what I heard, when fusion fails, raw materials of the weapon remain.
There was no time for her to prepare it beforehand.

“W-Well, when you do it, can you please call skill incantation out loud?”

I take precaution.
Are wise men always this calm?

“I understand.”
“Descend O Lord xx, O shadow of heaven and earth.”

Sherry slowly recites the skill incantation.

“Hmm…”
“That’s probably it.”
“What was that word?”

I point out the word that wasn’t translated.

“Was that not the correct word? If that’s the case, I think it might be ‘to celebrate.’”
“‘To celebrate’ it is.”
“‘To celebrate’… alright. Descend O Lord to celebrate, O shadow of heaven and earth.”

Sherry recites corrected spell incantation.
Perfect.
If it weren’t, I would have received another prompt for correction.

When Sherry was done, she looks at me.
I nod silently in approval, and hand the Copper Sword and the Monster Card over to her.
Copper Sword in right hand, Rabbit Monster Card in left.
She places her left hand holding the Monster Card directly above her right hand holding the Copper Sword.

“Descend O Lord to celebrate, O shadow of heaven and earth — Monster Card Fusion.”

She calls the skill incantation out.

The next instant, Sherry's hands are glowing.
With dazzling, bright white light.
The moment the light subsided…

Only a sword remained.

Copper Sword of Obstruction | Two Handed Sword
Skill: Incantation Delay
(TL: It translates as Bronze Sword, but romanji is same as Copper Sword. Also, it is basically Copper Sword with Incantation Delay skill, so I opted for Copper Sword of Obstruction instead of Bronze Sword of Obstruction.)

Success!
Apparently, if you attach Incantation Delay skill to a Copper Sword, it becomes Copper Sword of Obstruction.
Also, my hypothesis of fusing a Monster Card with a weapon with empty skill slot was indeed correct.

"Sherry, you did well."

I take the sword from Sherry, and check it out.
Save for Incantation Delay skill, Copper Sword of Obstruction doesn't seem any different from a Copper Sword.

"Master, was it a success?"
"Of course."
"You did it, Sherry."

When I answer Roxanne's question, she congratulates Sherry.

"You did well, Sherry."
"-y…"

Sherry, however, has a funny expression on her face.
She puts her face down on the table, and starts groaning.

"What is it?"
"-ry…"

“What’s the matter?”
“I’m sorry. I’m sorry to have succeeded. I’m sorry to have become a Master Smith. I’m sorry to have been born.”

She keeps apologizing.
Puzzled, I exchange glances with Roxanne.

Ah, so it’s that.
I remember something similar from a while back.
It’s the state of MP exhaustion.
When you’re out of MP, your mind is overwhelmed with negativity.

For a Master Smith Lv1, MP will naturally be low.
I wonder if it’s barely enough to use Monster Card Fusion only once at a time.

I hand the sword over to Roxanne, and move to the other side of the table.
I take out a Mana Pill from my Item Box.
I bought it earlier as a precaution, for emergencies such as this one.

“It’s alright. Sherry is important. Sherry is amazing. Here, take this medicine.”
“I am not worthy of using such a precious medicine. I’ll be fine. I’m really sorry.”

Sherry shakes her head in refusal.
She’s in a condition where she’s not even accepting medicine.
This is no different from dying.

“Rest easy. Sherry succeeded. Sherry is amazing.”
“No, I’m not. I only succeeded because I’m useless.”

Did I too have such a train of thought at that time?
Everything seems to be negative to her.

“But Sherry’s Monster Card Fusion was a success. Sherry is great.”

While Roxanne was cheering Sherry up, I put the Pill in her mouth.
This mental state is really painful.
If you have means to cure it, use them as early as possible.

I hold Sherry, and turn her face to me.
Her pale red, tiny mouth is so lovely.
I lock my mouth with hers.
I pry her mouth open, and stick my tongue in.

Our tongues are all entwined now.
It's our first time kissing so passionately.
I can see a glimmer of hope.

I move my tongue around.
Then I rest my tongue a little, and let Sherry calm down.
To ensure that the Pill finds the passage down her throat.

I pull my tongue back, but keep my lips pressed on hers, and wait for her to swallow the Pill down.
After confirming movement in her throat, I let go of her mouth.

"So, have you calmed down now?"
"…Yes. Umm…"
"You don't have to apologize, it's fine."

I place my hand on her fluffy head, and stroke her hair.
Now calm, Sherry takes a deep breath.

"Come to think of it, I have heard of such a thing. When someone becomes a Master Smith, and fail at their first Monster Card Fusion, they commit suicide."

Even after succeeding, it turned out like this.
It's understandable to wanting to commit suicide in the event of failing.
And if you leave it at that, you might indeed die.

"It's temporary, so don't worry about it."
"Okay."

Sherry is taking deep breaths to calm herself down.
How she became a Master Smith remains unasked, so it can be considered a good end result.

"Eh? Is Sherry really a Master Smith now?"

While I was having that thought, a bullet comes in from the least expected direction.
From Roxanne's direction.

"That's right."
"But how?"

How, you ask? Well, you won't get it even if I tell you.

"I can do it. How I do it, however, is a secret."
"Is that so?"
"That is so."
"As one would expect from master. Master is amazing."

Roxanne withdraws with an expression of respect.
In any case, this matter is settled now thanks to Roxanne.

"He really can do it. It's amazing."

Sherry, having calmed herself down, grasps the situation.
I expected her to pursue it further, but she doesn't.
Rather, she looks at me with sparkling eyes.

I wonder if my impression to her has improved a little.
A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.
To gain her trust, I have to take one step at a time.

"Sherry being a Master Smith increases my attack power too."

Roxanne says something strange.

"Huh?"
"Being a Master Smith benefits all party members. Finally, I can be of help."

Sherry says the same thing.

"A Beast Warrior doesn't increase attack power of other party members.
Sherry really is amazing."
"What do you mean?"

I ask Sherry.

“Having a Master Smith in the party increases attack power of all party members. This has been known since olden days.”
“Is that so?”
“Yes.”
“Is that so?”
“Yes.”

I ask Roxanne too, and receive the same answer.

“Did you not know that?”

Sherry’s eyes look cold.
Her stare intensifies.

These same eyes had respect for me just a while ago.
Ebb and flow.
No, not really. I took 3 steps forward, and went 2 steps back.
It must be so. It has to be so.

“Having a Master Smith in the party increases attack power of all party members?”

But there was no such skill last time I checked.
Hmm…
Is there really such a skill?

Master Smith Lv1
Effects: Medium Increase in Strength | Small Increase in Stamina | Small Increase in Dexterity
Skills: Create Weapon | Create Armor | Monster Card Fusion | Item Box

There’s an effect ‘Medium Increase in Strength.’
So when strength increases, attack power increases as well.
Or in other words, to increase attack power, you need to increase your strength?

Beast Warrior Lv20
Effects: Medium Increase in Agility | Small Increase in Stamina | Small

Increase in Dexterity
Skill: Beast Attack

There's no 'Increase in Strength' effect.

"What is it?"

While confirming her job details, I look at Roxanne with a face full of doubts, so she asks.

"There is no increase in your, Beast Warrior's, attack power."
"It's unfortunate."
"Rather, your true strength lies in your quick movement."

Instead of 'Increase in Strength,' Beast Warrior has 'Increase in Agility' effect.

"Definitely."
"It is also believed that having a Beast Warrior in the party increases movement speed of all party members. This, however, is a hypothesis at this point, and remains to be substantiated."

Sherry explains on behalf of Roxanne.

"So the increase in attack power has been confirmed?"
"Yes, by counting the number of same attacks it required to take out a certain monster of certain level, with and without a Master Smith in the party.
"I see."

So to some extent, scientific research is carried out even in this world.
It seems to have been confirmed that having a Master Smith in the party increases attack power of all party members.

"The great scholar of the past thus confirmed it."

The great scholar of the past.
That great scholar of the past really seems to be great.

“Aside from Master Smith, are there no other jobs that increase attack power of the party members? Swordsman, for instance.”
“So you have understood the idea. It is indeed believed that having a Swordsman in the party increases attack power of the party members.”

Like I thought.
Because Swordsman has an effect ‘Small Increase in Strength.’
By having a party member with a job that has an effect ‘Increase in Strength,’ like Master Smith and Swordsman, all party members can have their attack power increased.
In other words, an effect of a job is shared with all party members.

So it was like that.
I have been mistaking it until now.
The effect of one’s job is not effective only to one’s own self.
I never imagined it to be like that.

Also, should I say ‘Increase in Strength’ increases attack power of a Swordsman because it is the characteristic of that job?
‘Increase in Strength’ might not necessarily increase attack power of a Beast Warrior.
Because I have already confirmed that my magic attack becomes weak when I cancel Hero job, ‘Increase in Intelligence’ is unmistakably the characteristic of Hero job. (TL: It should be the characteristic of Wizard job, not Hero job. But that’s how it’s in raws, so bear with it.)
So if I’m not a party member, will the absence of ‘Increase in Intelligence’ have a detrimental effect on Sherry and Roxanne?

“If there’s a Wizard in the party, magic attack of the party members increases?”
“Indeed.”
“Well then, it would be great to have an all Wizard party of six.”
“It would be, if you take only magic attack into account. Wizards, however, are rare, and they would be in trouble in the absence of a vanguard.”

Is that so?
Of course it is so.
you must have balanced party composition and skills.
It is imperative to have everything balanced.

Chapter 57 - Red Comet

Tonight, I wasn't able to test Enhanced Vigor skill of Sex Maniac.
For Roxanne is on her period.
After cancelling Sex Maniac, I made love with Sherry many times over.
Because I kissed Roxanne a lot, she wasn't dissatisfied.

Finally, after giving Roxanne one last kiss, I lay on the bed.
I turn to Roxanne, and extend my arms out to pull her into my embrace.

Right when I try to calm my breathing down, Sherry gets into the bed.
She has changed into negligee.
Sherry lies down next to me.
After a while, Roxanne speaks to me in a low voice.

"Are you going to retire for tonight?"
"It seems so. Master is exhausted after all."

'No, I'm not.' — that I want to say.
I read in some magazine that you have to put effort in both foreplay and afterplay in order please a woman.
Therefore, I always hug Roxanne like this, after kissing her.
And when I wake up in the morning, I always find myself clinging to her.

Hmm…
I should probably not deny it.
It's wise to go to sleep now.

"Yeah, I guess."
"Thank you, Sherry. Sorry for pushing you more than last night."
"Ah, no. Umm… it's not like I hate it."

You don't hate it?
That's great.
'Not hating it' is only one step away from 'loving it.'

"Is that so? Fufu"
"I-I was really surprised earlier."

She tries to dodge it.
Sherry tries to change the topic.

“It’s not like I doubt master, but is Sherry really a Master Smith now?
“Well, you successfully fused the Monster Card.”
“I did, I guess.”

Do you still not believe it?

“Because Monster Card Fusion mostly fails, I was worried.”
“Worried?”
“Yes, because I have heard of many tragic accounts.”

I knew it would come up.

“Is that so?”
“If they keep failing, Master Smith slaves are shunned away. It’s also not rare for them to be punished, and resold.”

Even to the extent of physical abuse.
Whore punishment.

“It’s alright. Master is not such a master.”
“Really?”
“Really.”
“Somehow, it’s difficult to tell whether a person is amazing or terrible, don’t you think?

Are they talking about me?

“Master is an amazing person.”

They are indeed talking about me.
Roxanne lifts her head up.
And turns her face to Sherry.
These two would now talk between them like last night.

During daytime, they are both with me all the time.
Therefore, opportunities to talk to each other are rare for them.

They were able to talk to each other in the clothing store, but it was probably not enough.

Well, it's better to be talking friendly like this than being on bad terms with each other.
Ladies' talk.
It would be silly of me to step in.

So I fall into dreamland by myself.

It's morning now. I wake up clinging to Roxanne.
Roxanne is so good a body pillow.
Soft body. Smooth hair on her back. Supple chest.
The feeling of embracing her is splendid.

My legs, however, are entangled with Sherry's.
Lower half of my body is awkwardly twisted.
Because there's no pain in my muscles, however, I'm not feeling uncomfortable.

After confirming the state of my body, I kiss Roxanne.
Although she went to sleep after me, she woke up before me.
Roxanne always gets up before me.
Perhaps it is easier for her to wake up.

While kissing her, I tighten my embrace, so I get to taste both her mouth and chest.
I feel her tongue around my mouth, so I invite it in.
Roxanne moves her tongue around in my mouth.
After my heart was content, I let go of her mouth.

"Good morning, master."
"Good morning."
"G-Good morning."

Sherry seems to be up too.
I release Roxanne from my arms, and pull Sherry close.

I kiss Sherry.
I have my tongue entwine with hers.

After giving her that Mana Pill mouth-to-mouth, Sherry seems to have become responsive at kissing.
I slowly move it around in Sherry's mouth.

"Good morning to you too, Sherry."

After tasting it fully, I separate my mouth from hers.

Today, we intend to move to floor 8 of Quratar town labyrinth as well.
After readying our equipment, I Warp us to Quratar town labyrinth floor 7.

"At boss level, Slow Rabbit turns into Rapid Rabbit. It moves quickly, so it's a troublesome monster. Magic attacks are not effective, for it can dodge magic attacks with ease. It's likely to be a drawn out battle, so we can't afford to be careless."

On our way to the boss room, I ask Sherry for information on the boss.

"Would it be difficult to surround the boss with us three?"
"It would probably be. I think I should use spear this time. Hammer is too large and slow to use, so it can be dodged."

We confirm the location of the boss room.
And mark it on the floor map.
When we arrived at the waiting room, there was no one in queue.
I was concerned about long waiting line, for the battle is supposed to be drawn out. However, there were not many people around this early in the morning.

"For now, we will hunt Slow Rabbits. Then after breakfast, we will go to the Imperial Capital. Roxanne, search for Slow Rabbits in this area."
"Understood."

Because Sherry is borrowing Roxanne's negligee, we need to buy one more.
We can also sell rabbit fur to the clothing store in the Imperial Capital.

However, that was only half the reason. My actual concern was Sherry being Master Smith Lv1.

“Because you just became a Master Smith, you don’t have to overdo it.”
“Okay.”
“Slow Rabbits here can’t be taken out in one hit. If you don’t feel like it, we can move to lower floors.”
“No, it’s alright.”

Because ‘Medium Increase in HP’ and ‘Medium Increase in Endurance’ effects of my Hero job are also effective for Sherry, her defence can’t be weak as a paper.
Because I changed her job from Villager just yesterday, it’s better if her opponent is only a Slow Rabbit.

What would she do in this state against a boss level monster?
There’s another option of changing her job back to Explorer Lv10.
We hunted Slow Rabbits around for a while.

“How are the monster attacks?”

I ask Sherry.
When we were facing groups of three, Sherry received attacks.

“I’m fine.”
“How is it compared to yesterday?”
“As you would expect, it was better with Explorer yesterday.”

It is needless to ask something obvious.
However, she was a Villager yesterday, not Explorer.

“Would you be fine with the boss battle?”
“I think I’ll be fine. I’ll do my best.”

It seems risky.
Because ‘I’ll do my best’ situations are most of the times impossible situations.
Even if it’s worth a try, if we fail in the labyrinth, what awaits us is death.
Because the boss this time moves quickly, we should expect to receive attacks.

“Let’s go to the boss room then. Just to be safe, I’ll revert Sherry’s job back to the original.”

“Is such a thing even possible?”
“Of course.”

I change Sherry’s job to Explorer Lv10.
It’s good that I had changed her job earlier from Explorer to Villager.
Had I not, she would have leveled up to Explorer Lv12 or more yesterday.
And she would have noticed it from the size of her Item Box. It would have turned into rather bothersome situation.

After I prepare Durandal, we enter the boss room.

Rapid Rabbit Lv7

It’s body was slightly red in color.
It was no different in size compared to Slow Rabbit.

I raise Durandal, and rush forward.
The moment I swing it down, the monster escapes to the right.
Fast.

Roxanne runs after it to the right.
While running to the right, Rapid Rabbit suddenly kicks the ground, and takes a 90-degrees turn, intending to attack Roxanne.
Roxanne shifts her body, parrying the attack with her shield.

“Sherry, watch out.”

The rabbit flicks out, and runs toward Sherry.
With a spear in her hands, Sherry waits for it.
The moment the rabbit comes within her range, Sherry thrusts her spear.
However, at that moment, Rapid Rabbit flies to her side.

In but a moment, it jumps diagonally to dodge the spear, and attacks Sherry.
Sherry staggers.
Changing her job back to Explorer Lv10 was a correct decision indeed.

The red monster comes after me now.
Fast.
I hold Durandal up and wait for it, but it changes direction in the nick of time.

“Ugh! it’s quick.”

I make a quick slash, but still miss.
In that moment, it rams into my body from the side.

Guah!
That was quite an impact.
For a Master Smith Lv1, it would be really bad.

The rabbit then runs toward Roxanne.
In the meantime, I cast Healing and Plating on Sherry and myself.
The monster jumps into the air to launch another ramming attack.
Roxanne repels it with her Scimitar.

I see.
That timing.

That precise timing. Such a precise timing.
I can only hope of pulling it off.
If it launches a ramming attack on me, I’m not confident in dodging it like she did.

Rapid Rabbit flips over, and rushes to me next.
While it approaches me, I cast Firestorm.
It’s an Area of Effect magic. Dodging it is impossible.

Amidst the sparks, the rabbit comes to a halt.
Even if it’s a monster, it would falter upon receiving an attack.
I can’t miss this chance. Durandal!

Kuh!
It dodges again. Damn it!
Only Roxanne has been able to successfully land physical attacks on it.
Can it only be killed by magic attacks?

However, I have no idea how many magic attacks it would take before it dies.
Normal Lv7 monsters take 5 magic attacks before they die. Boss type monsters take three times as much.
Pan even took several strikes of Durandal.

Do I have to keep using magic attack until it dies?
That's not feasible. I might run out of MP before it dies.

The rabbit comes to attack again.
This time, I draw him in even more.
Only to receive the ramming attack with my body.

I cast Healing and Plating again.
I have to reserve my MP for Healing and Plating too.

Rapid Rabbit charges toward Roxanne in zigzag.
Is it even possible to move like that?
It flies from left to right, approaches from the right, feigns it, and then jumps back to the left.

Roxanne sways half a step down, avoiding the charge lightly.
When they pass each other by, Roxanne slashes with her Scimitar at its lower body, knocking the rabbit over.
Roxanne's movement seems superior to Rapid Rabbit.
Roxanne is shutting it out all on her own, blocking it completely.
How long will it take? I have no idea.

Knocked over rabbit now lands on the ground.
Sherry was there in waiting with her spear.
The rabbit receives a diagonal swipe on its side, and rolls over.

"I did it!"
"Wow, great."
"I thought of trying this."

Knocked over by Roxanne, it was unable to change its trajectory.
Even if it's Rapid Rabbit, it can't change its course in midair.
If you can attack in that instant, it might land successfully.
A spear would be better for such an attack, with its long reach.
Sherry is smart.

The monster stands up immediately, and starts running toward me.
Following Roxanne, Sherry landed an attack too.
I won't be the only one to keep missing.

I draw Rapid Rabbit in.
Until the last moment.
Until the very last moment.
Close enough to receive its ramming attack with my body.

After I confirm it has jumped to launch its attack, I call for Overwhelming in my mind.
The movement of the demon suddenly becomes slow.
In the slowed down space, I move to the side to get out of the course of that attack.
Time to teach this rabbit that running speed isn't decisive factor in a battle.

"Chest!"

I thrust Durandal into the rabbit.
Rapid Rabbit vanishes.
It flicks out again. Damn it!
Regrettably, we have only one such sword.

With every attack, I can recover a fraction of MP expended in casting Overwhelming.
Because of this, the cost of casting it gets significantly reduced.

I approach it again, swinging Durandal from directly above this time.
To slam it onto the rabbit below.
I swing the sword down.
Rapid Rabbit flicks out and rolls over.

Rather than dodging, it felt more like defending.
Pretty close.
However, two consecutive strikes might not always work.

Ugh! It has never been this difficult to connect a hit.
Because I can recover a fraction of MP with every attack, however, I patiently repeat the same pattern over.
Currently, we have the rabbit cornered.

Again and again, it flicks out and falls over in the vicinity of Sherry.
Sherry doesn't miss those chances, and pierces it with her spear.

Rapid Rabbit comes at me again.
It charges forward in zigzag.
Has this monster recognized me as a formidable enemy?

However, no matter how much it jumps around, it's not my concern.
I would simply wait for it to fly at me with ramming attack.
Fu~ how wise of me.
The instant it leaps, I cast Overwhelming.

The movement of Rapid Rabbit slows down.
Because it's right in front of me, however, dodging it would be difficult. I calmly wait for it.
I hold Durandal up.
It deflects Rapid Rabbit.

The monster rolls over on the ground.
Because I had no choice but to receive its charge from the front, I wasn't able to direct it toward Sherry.
The rabbit stands up, but doesn't charge at us.
It seems it has run out of fuel.
Rapid Rabbit turns into smoke, and disappears.

Rabbit meat.

What remained was rabbit meat.
Even for a Slow Rabbit, a normal monster, rabbit meat is a rare drop.

"Is this Chest skill? It's different from what I heard."

Sherry picks the item up, and brings it over.

"No, it's a different skill."
"I couldn't see your movement at all."
"It's called Overwhelming. Do you know about it?"
"No, I don't. But it seems to be an amazing skill."

I can see respect in Sherry's eyes.
A master's life is 25 years. I'm not happy about this. (TL: Not sure about what he means here. My guess is that it's default term of slave contract.)

“Because people don’t know about it, it’s a secret.”
“Ah, okay. I understand.”

I warn Sherry about it, so it’ll be alright.
Did the first emperor not have Overwhelming skill?
Or was the information not passed down?

“As expected of master.”

Roxanne praises me.

“Thank you.”
“It was tremendously quick movement. Even I almost lost sight of you.”

You almost lost sight of me? So you didn’t lose sight of me.
It seems Roxanne was able to keep up with my movement under the effect Overwhelming.

Chapter 58 - Eighth floor

We passed the seventh floor, and moved on to the eighth floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

"Do you know which demon appears on the eighth floor here?"

I asked Sherry.

"Um, I'm not sure. I don't know where we are."
"Ah, we are in Quratar's Labyrinth."
"Quratar's Labyrinth?"
"Didn't I mention it?"

Is that so?

"He probably did. I saw that the demons were the same as Quratar's Labyrinth, but we didn't pay any money to get it. Is that because of the space-time magic? If that's so, we don't pay."

Sherry mutters.
Though it's required to pay money to enter Quratar's Labyrinth, I don't pay.
Is that why you didn't think it was Quratar's Labyrinth?
The genius didn't notice?

"Is it bad that we didn't pay?"
"No. It's expected that the entrance fee is paid when you enter Quratar's Labyrinth, but you aren't using the entrance so it's wise not to pay. That's what I think."

I don't want the explorer there to notice me either.
It's good.

"As expected of Master."

Roxanne praises me, but Roxanne was the first to suggest it.

"So, do you know the demon on Quratar's eighth floor?"
"Ah. Yes. The demon on the eighth floor of Quratar's Labyrinth is the Needle

Wood. It should be safe since we've fought them in Vale's Labyrinth. It can rarely use water magic. Don't use water magic on it because it has a high resistance to water."

Sherry explained.
It seems I still shouldn't use water magic against Needle Woods.

"I've never seen one use magic."
"It's because it's on a low floor in Vale's Labyrinth, it won't use it on lower floors."
"Is that so?"
"Demons start to practice magic and skills as you go up in floors. I think the Needle Wood might start to rarely use magic on the eighth floor."

On higher floors, monster level is also higher.
Since level goes up, magic and skills also go up.

"I understand. You've been useful again Sherry."
"Thank you."
"I will continue to ask in the future. Roxanne, find a few demons."
"Certainly."

Should I equip Durandal to deal with the magic?
If I use it straight away, I won't know which magic it is.
Should I wait and see?

For the time being, I'll leave Sherry as Explorer Lv10.
It's possible that magic might one-shot a Master Smith Lv1.

We hunt on the eighth floor.
However, the Needle Wood's don't use magic.
It seems to be quite uncommon.

I'm impatient, and change Sherry's job to Master Smith Lv1.
Explorer has gone up to Lv11.
It would probably go up to Lv12 if I left it.
The first magic happens when a group of four Needle Woods appear.

Three Needle Woods come forward as I use [Fire Storm].
One slows down & turns around.

Needle Woods are plant demons that swing their branches around.
The cave in the Labyrinth might be too narrow for four to line up.

“Roxanne, handle two. Sherry, handle one.”

Three [Fire Storm] are used as they come forward.
A fourth is used as they face the vanguards.

“It’s coming.”

Roxanne gives a warning.
When I look, there’s a blue ball over the demon’s head.
It looks like a [Water Ball].

The Needle Wood launches the magic.
It’s fast.

It’s straight & fast like Water Polo.
Towards Roxanne.

Roxanne twists her upper body just a little.
The magic is avoided just by twisting.
It passes just beside her.
The magic hits the wall after doing nothing.

You can dodge it?
It seems that it’s not at a speed where it can’t be avoided.

I used a fifth [Fire Storm].
The sparks dance & attack the demons.
All four of the Needle Wood’s fall.

“As expected of Roxanne, you can dodge magic.”
“It’s because it was shot from the second row of demons. If you can see magic at that distance you can avoid it.”

No. It’s impossible.
There’s not enough room.
There’s not enough distance.

“Is that so?”
“It made use of the other demons as distractions, it probably didn’t think it would hit otherwise.”

I don’t think it’s possible.
As Sherry passes me the item she picked up I ask her what she thinks with my eyes. She silently shakes her head.

“That’s how it is.”
“That’s how what is?”

Roxanne asks.

“Ah. The branch. It’s needed for smithing. We’ll have to keep some instead of selling them.”
“Ah, yes. We need that.”

I managed to get through the conversation somehow.
The items dropped are one leaf, and three branches.

“That reminds me, how do you use the branch?”

I heard that a Master Smith uses branches when I was in Vale.
I was told it was a necessary item for them.

“When making the metal parts of weapons and armor, a branch is used along with the materials.”

It seems to be necessary for processing metals.
It’s a requirement.

“Do you need a furnace as well?”
“Everything is done by the skill. No special devices are necessary.”

If you get the items then the skill will do the rest.

After that, we didn’t encounter many Needle Woods that used magic.
I worried about the level of Sherry’s job, and before realized, it increased from Lv1 to Lv2.
We’ll continue as is for now.

It isn't a requirement for a Needle Wood to be in the back row for it to use magic.
We encountered two Needle Wood's and a Slow Rabbit, and one of them used it.

"It's coming."

Roxanne gives a warning as a blue magic formation appears below a Needle Wood.
The ball of water appears over the demons head and flies forward.
At me.

"Gah."

I'm hit without a chance to avoid it.
Evasion is impossible.
It's really impossible.
It's absolutely impossible.

In my head I can understand when to avoid it, but do I dodge right or left? It hits me before I can think.

Enough time to evade it.
There isn't.

Even though I have [Plating] and I don't die in a single shot, it still feels quite strong.
It's a feeling like I've had my leg torn off.
Also, I'm soaked because it was water.
It's probably better than being hit by fire though.

Even though we killed the demon with the fifth [Fire Storm], the water didn't disappear.
The Green Caterpillar thread disappeared, but this doesn't.
Since I was struck in the leg, it looks like I wet myself.
It's not very bright in the Labyrinth, so I'll just try not to stand out.

The water dries before we leave the Labyrinth.
We finish up in a small room, and find a magic crystal.
The magic crystal is useful, so we put it in the rucksack.

“It’s finally dry.”
“Things that use magic will disappear when magic runs out, but things made with magic will remain even after the magic has ended. A demons body is conjured by magic, but it’s assumed that part of it is fully made since it drops items.”

Sherry explains.
It’s a little hard to understand.

“Hmm.”
“Oh.”

When I move a magic crystal over to the item box, Sherry lets out a noise.

“What?”
“Oh, it’s nothing. I just noticed the purple magic crystal became a blue magic crystal.”

Ah, because the crystal had progressed.
The blue magic crystal has the magic from 1000 demons stored in it.

“Mine is purple.”

Roxanne passes over a purple magic crystal.
We used this crystal for a test, and it’s become purple.
Sherry has one as well, and it’s become red.

“Wasn’t there a purple crystal and two black crystals yesterday?”
“Is that how it was?”
“If it’s Master, they’ll increase easily.”

Roxanne gives a nice follow-up.
Sherry looks a bit doubtful, but doesn’t have cold eyes.

After breakfast, we go to the Imperial Capital.

“Wow, It’s huge.”

When we leave the adventurers guild in the Imperial Capital, Sherry looks around at the nearby buildings.
It doesn't seem that big to me.

"Is this your first time in the Imperial Capital, Sherry?"
"Yes."

A country bumpkin.

"Roxanne and I came here recently for the first time as well."
"We did."

Roxanne nods as I turn to her.

"You won't normally come here without some kind of business."
"Is that so?"

There doesn't seem to be the concept of sight seeing in this world yet.
As Sherry says, a commoner won't need to come to the Imperial Capital.
Even though it's so easy to travel around if you find an adventurer with [Field Walk].
Ordinary people just don't have the spirit of adventure.

"I've wanted to come here for a long time."

Sherry mutters quietly.

"Hmm?"
"Ah, oh, nothing."
"What did you want to do?"

I was curious, so I tried to ask.

"Well, there's a library in the Imperial Capital. I've wanted to go there for so long."
"There's a library?"

To want to visit the library. As expected of the smart one.

“We had ten books at our house growing up, but they were only dwarven books related to smithing.”

I’m not sure if ten is a large or small amount.
Paper is valuable in this world.
There’s probably not many houses with any books.
Is Sherry from a wealthy family?

Then I don’t know why she became a slave.
She said it was while growing up.
Perhaps the family fell into ruin.
I won’t touch that subject.

“It’s amazing that your house had books.”

Roxanne doesn’t think about it?
She’s just being herself.

“It’s an old story. We were quite prosperous when my grandfather was alive.”
“I see, and you became knowledgeable reading books?”

I try to return to the original story.
We shouldn’t continue on this topic.

“We had them in the house since long ago.”
“I always wanted to become a Master Smith.”
“I did my best and entered the Labyrinth when I became an explorer.”

I suspect she was a wealthy young lady that stayed indoors.
Is that why her villager level was so low?

“I’ve liked books since long ago, so I wanted to go to the Library.”
“Ahh.”
“Shall we go now?”

I don’t have any books either.
Well, if you can call the capture map of Quratar’s Labyrinth a book, then I have one.

“Eh? But I’m a slave now.”
“Well… I’d like to go…”
“But I can’t go.”

Is there a problem?
It might have been a wise choice not to mention it from the start.

“If you’re a slave, you can’t use the Library?”
“That’s not it. If you pay, you can go in. But it’s an extremely high price.”
“It’s high?”
“Aside from admission fees, there is also a deposit. You can get the deposit back if you don’t damage any books, but you need one gold coin.”

It’s to protect their valuable books.
It’s reasonable.
Strange people won’t go in because they don’t want to lose their deposit.
You can make up for problems with money.

“I see, well I’ll let Sherry go into the Library.”
“What?”
“Well, Sherry teaches things about demons. If you don’t know something, you can learn it. I’ll let you go to the Library that you’ve wanted to visit.”

If I don’t know something, Sherry can learn about it.
It’s a good idea.
Anyway, I’ve been skipping learning to read characters from Roxanne lately.

I wasn’t good at learning English either.
On top of my Japanese, I hope you’ll forgive me for not learning English or Brahim.
I really envy Schliemann
TN: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinrich_Schliemann
“Ah, Thank you.”
“Oh, can you read Brahim Sherry?”
“Yes. I learnt to read it in the Slave Traders establishment because the characters are the same.”

I see.
If you understand the alphabet it’s possible to read English, German & French, even if you can’t understand it.
It must be something similar.

“The books that you had in your house weren’t written in Brahim?”
“They were written in the dwarven language because they were related to smithing.”
“Sherry is amazing, though I learnt the characters in the Slave Traders establishment as well.”
“Roxanne, was there anywhere you wanted to go?”

I looked to her side and asked.

“No, not really.”
“I see.”
“Oh, that. Can I go with you?”

Roxanne watches my eyes.

“To where I’d like to go?”
“Yes. Wherever Master wants to go, I want to go. Can you take me with you?”

She’s trying to be modest.
I pat her dog ears on reflex.
Roxanne is still the best.

“I understand. That’s fine.”
“Okay.”
“Ah, I want to come along as well.”

Sherry asks as well.
It feels like I’ve been pushed into it.

Chapter 59 - Broker

I went to the clothing store in the Imperial Capital.
The same store where I bought the negligee and camisole that Sherry and Roxanne use.

“Buy one for each of you.”
“Understood. Thank you.”

I instructed Roxanne, and left to sell rabbit fur.
Because they took too long last time, I didn’t want to accompany them in shopping this time.
When I came back, however, they had still not finished shopping.

Roxanne picks up a camisole from the stand, and checks it minutely.
It’s pale pink, and looks same as the one she bought last time.

“Is this color that good?”
“Yes, because you said last time that it looked good on me.”

I call out to her, and receive a smile in return.
Come to think of it, did I really say last time that this color looked good on her?
I might have said that it looked good, but not particularly on her.
It’s best, however, to not say that out loud.

“Is that so? Thank you. Sherry, do you like white?”
“Yes, because it’s easier this way than choosing a color.”

Sounds rational.
Roxanne seems to have chosen pale pink, and Sherry has chosen white.

Because children don’t use negligee, there wasn’t one of her size. For this reason, Sherry had to choose next best size available there.
It was a little oversized, so much that the skirt became a long skirt.

But it’s negligee, so it’s size isn’t a concern.

Having done with the clothing store in the Imperial Capital, we head to the Merchant Guild in Quratar town.
We come to a halt at the entrance, and a man different from yesterday approaches us.

“What business might you have at Merchant Guild?”
“Mainly auction.”
“I’m Luke, a broker. May I entertain you, if you don’t mind?”

Luke Acid | Male | 28 years old
Armor Merchant Lv2
Equipment: Sacrificial Misanga
(TL: Misanga)
Oh, an Armor Merchant.
He may seem to have low level, but he is actually young for his job.
To be an Armor Merchant, you need to be at least Explorer Lv30.
It’s quite difficult.

“Seems fine to me.”
“Well then, this way please.”

We are led to a room inside the guild. It looks similar to the one from yesterday.
The broker goes to sit across while Roxanne and Sherry sit next to me.

“I’m Michio.”
“I recall you visiting the guild yesterday. Was there no order placed?”

I was seen, it seems.

“No, there wasn’t.”
“There is a waiting room on the left from the entrance. In case the placed order has been filled, the auction results are posted on a bulletin there. Otherwise, the broker personally visits you to annul the placed order. “

I see.
There is such a rule in place.
There seems to be solidarity among brokers.

When a person comes to Merchant Guild, a broker approaches the person, and it leads to new customer relationship.
This is to ensure that their interests are protected.

This way, every broker has equal chance of gaining a new customer.
If a person could talk freely to any broker, there would be a race to win customers, leading to shrinking commission.

“Was I approached by a broker, both yesterday and today, because I was standing at the entrance?”
“Ah, not at all.”
“Yesterday, I talked to a broker named Laurel. Don’t you mind?”
“If there was no order placed, I don’t mind.”

I thought it would be considered inappropriate to switch brokers, but it doesn’t seem to be the case.

“Then there’s no problem.”
“So what kind of order do you want placed for the auction?”
“Both purchase and sell.”
“In regard to buying, we, brokers, are receiving many purchase orders. So, what kind of item do you want to buy?”

As expected, he wants to lead me into buying first.
But I can’t always be there to attend the auction.
Therefore, those who are new, like me, understand the need for brokers.

“Kobold Monster Card.”
“The day before yesterday, there was a successful bid of 5,200 Nar for a Kobold Monster Card. However, the buyer seems to be broke now, and the order stands annulled. It’s slightly high, but I can try to bring it down a bit. The day before that, there was a successful bid of 5,400 Nar.”

The broker answers quickly without looking at his notepad.
He seems to be an excellent broker.

Because I have already used Rabbit Monster Card, I can’t get Incantation Interruption skill, even if I buy Kobold Monster Card.
It was merely a question to cross check the information I obtained yesterday. To have all successful bids memorized passes him for further

business.
He also pointed out to buy at 5,200 Nar.

“It doesn’t seem to be good time to buy. Oh well, let’s talk about selling then.”
“What would you like to sell?”
“Six Copper Swords of Obstruction.”
“Oh, is that one over there a Master Smith?”

The broker takes a glance at Sherry.
He can tell at a glance that she’s a dwarf.
Hair and short height aside, there’s not much of a difference between a dwarf and a human.

“That’s correct. She’s Sherry.”

I introduce Sherry to him.
I thought she would introduce herself, but she remains silent.
Although I don’t know etiquette of this world, it can’t be much different, right?

“There are two options available to you. First, I buy the items from you right now. Second, I notify you when I find the best opportunity to sell. commission shall be charged in latter case.”
“Can you tell me the estimated time?”

I wasn’t informed of this option yesterday.
Isn’t it better, if I’m notified when it’s best to sell?
But it isn’t any better if I’m selling at the bargained price.
You can’t expect to sell at the same price as the price which you buy at from a broker.

“Even I can’t tell you when the best time to sell will be. If you’re in a hurry to sell, I suggest you to sell to me right now.”
“I’m not particularly in a hurry to sell, but I’m wondering if it would be better to sell to you right now.”

It’s possible to sell for higher, if I wait.
On the other hand, if I sell right now, I can invest the money I receive in upgrading our equipment.

Selling early seems more beneficial, even though I might be selling for less.
It's not like it'll grow, if kept in Item Box for long.

"As you may already know, Copper Sword of Obstruction is quite useful on lower floors of labyrinth. For this reason, it's used by young knights in training, so there's quite a demand in the Order of Knights for a set of six."
"I don't have that sort of connections."
"But I have, so it's better for you to sell to me."

From what the broker said, it would indeed be better for the Order of Knights to buy it directly, rather than from the auction.

The broker knows well that I don't have any connections in the Order of Knights.
So there's no risk for him in suggesting it to me. Rather, it improves his credibility.

Still, he's an excellent broker.
He surely has connections in the Order of Knights.

I look at Roxanne and Sherry.
They don't seem to have any objection either.

"How much can you buy these swords for?"
"15,000 Nar for one sword. For a set of six, however, I can give you 100,000 Nar."

Price isn't much different from yesterday.
Is this the market price?

"How about 18,000 Nar for one sword?"
"That's too much."
"17,500 Nar?"
"I'll buy six at 17,000 Nar apiece."

The price hardly went up, but it's alright.

"That would do, I guess."
"Thank you. Do you have the swords with you right now?"
"Yes, in my Item Box."

“Okay then, let’s have a Weapons Merchant appraise it. Because I’m an Armor Merchant, I can’t do it myself. Please be at ease, the appraisal charge is on me. As soon as we have confirmation, I’ll make the payment.”

The broker stands up.
We stand up as well, and go out of the room with him.

“We had already decided to sell these swords, so there’s no problem.”
“Okay.”
“I was able to make a set of six only because of Sherry. Thank you, Sherry.”

While the broker was distracted, I take out six Copper Swords of Obstruction.
Because I would have to recite incantation in front of the broker, it would be troublesome.

The broker comes back with a Weapons Merchant.
This Weapons Merchant is probably a broker as well.
The Weapons Merchant picks a sword up from the table, and checks it out.

“All six are unmistakably Copper Swords of Obstruction.”

The Weapons Merchant confirms, then leaves.

“There doesn’t seem to be any problem. I’ll buy then, six swords at 17,000 Nar apiece. Because this is our first transaction, however, and I look forward to more business with you, I will give you 132,600 Nar.”

The broker opens his Item Box.
He puts six Copper Swords of Obstruction into his Item Box, and takes out gold and silver coins.
13 gold and 26 silver coins.

30% bonus. Wonderful.
It was effective because of negotiating price for one sword instead of for a set of six.
As planned.

“Well then, if there’s some cheap Monster Card available in future, I would like to buy it. Is it possible?”

I receive the money, and put it in my Item Box.
While putting it in, I talk about future business.

This man, Luke, is an excellent broker. And because he's an Armor Merchant, 30% bonus will be effective.
Isn't it better to do business with him in future?

It's an absolute advantage to be able to identify empty skill slots on weapons using Appraisal.
Monster Card Fusion is possible without any fear of failure.
I have decided to auction off weapons with Monster Card skills attached from now on.
If it's difficult to do it by myself, I will do it through a broker. There's no helping it.

Actually, there's an advantage of not exposing myself by doing it through a broker.
Because it's a business secret, Luke won't talk about his trading partner.
Market price won't fluctuate either, if I sell in small quantity, rather than in bulk.

Not a bad deal for either of us.

"Monster Card?"
"That's right."

Luke gazes at me and Sherry with a doubtful look on his face.
Alternating his gaze between me and Sherry.
I wonder what it's about.
Did I say something strange?

"Well, you do have experience and skill, I can see."

Luke shakes his head slightly.
He thinks that Sherry is the one to successfully make six Copper Swords of Obstruction.
To be able to successfully fuse six times is considered quite an skill.
There's no use in going out of the way to point out that she fused only one of these six swords.

Experience huh?
Sherry's ears are pointed, which is a feature of a mature dwarf female.
It's a relief that he didn't straight out call her a hag.

"Of course Sherry is skilled."
"If you intend to buy a cheap Monster Card, to fuse it with a weapon, and sell it elsewhere for higher, I won't recommend you doing that."
"You should fuse Monster Cards with only equipment of your own use, and auction off equipment that you don't have any use of anymore. After all, there has been no precedent of a Master Smith who can successfully fuse Monster Cards with certainty."

I see.
There are many competing Master Smiths, and there are many who fail at it.

Monster Card Fusion is a gamble.
If successful, you're in riches.
Actually, even if you're successful but you don't have connections, part of the profit goes to broker, which is harsh.
With big dreams, Master Smiths try their luck, but most of them fail in the end.

"It's a popular belief that success rate of Monster Card Fusion increases, if Master Smith is skilled."

Sherry comments.
Because it's Sherry who'll be responsible for fusion.
She seems anxious.

This, however, is in my favor.
Because success rate doesn't seem to be dependent on the level of a Master Smith.

"Don't worry, I won't ask you to do something unreasonable."

I reassure Sherry.

"Is that so?"
"I don't plan on taking any gamble. I only want to upgrade our equipment."

I explain to Luke as well.

“Well, it’s my job, i’ll gladly be the broker. Because there’s extreme competition, however, getting a Monster Card for cheap would be impossible. What would be the acceptable price to you?”

He seems to be willing.
I have at least 130,000 Nar available.
There’s no problem in that regard.

“As long as it’s less than the going rate, there’s no problem. I’ll leave the decision to you. Go for Insect-Eater Pincer Plant first.”
“MP Absorption?”

Sherry asks. I nod to her in confirmation.
Insect-Eater Pincer Plant Monster Card.

“That, and Rabbit Monster Card, even if it’s a little expensive. After that, go for Kobold Monster Card.”

Bonus points from Durandal can then be allocated toward increasing Gained Experience.
That should be our first objective.
Incantation Interruption is useful too against Needle Wood Lv8.

“Insect-Eater Pincer Plant and Rabbit Monster Cards?”
“Is there anything else?”

I ask Sherry.

“We can also buy Caterpillar Monster Card to make Sacrificial Misanga.”

Luke is wearing a Sacrificial Misanga too.
When you get attacked, does it sacrifice itself for you?

“Caterpillar Monster Card… okay, added. This might end up on higher side.”
“Well then, there will be commission of 500 Nar. You’ll have to pay it in advance. When there’s a successful bid, i’ll send a messenger over. When you visit Merchant Guild, please proceed to the waiting room, and ask the

representative of the guild to call Armor Merchant Luke."
"Alright."

I take out 5 silver coins, and hand over to Luke.

"Well then, I look forward to more business with you."

Luke bows, and finishes the talk.
Pressed by his words, I leave the room.

"That man was strange."

Sherry says immediately after leaving Merchant Guild.

"Strange?"
"Even if it's a bonus, why quote such an odd figure as 132,600? No matter how much I think about it, I can't understand."
"Ah, I see."

From a third person's point of view, it would indeed be an odd figure.
It's natural to be suspicious about it.

"He is a broker after all. It's better to not trust him too much."

Sherry has some distrust toward brokers, it seems.

"Thank you for your concern."
"No, it's nothing to thank for."
"Still, thank you. I'll be more careful doing business next time."
"He must have realized the splendor of master, that's why he gave that bonus."

It would be better for Roxanne to have some distrust toward brokers too.

Chapter 60 - Smithery

“So, what kind of equipment is Sacrificial Misanga?

It caught my interest, so I ask Sherry.

“It’s an equipment that may receive enemy’s attack in your stead.”
“May receive?”

Does it have certain chance to proc?

“Basically, it activates against strong attacks, when there’s a clear difference in your strength and your enemy’s strength. Therefore, it activates more on higher floors. It’s hardly seen activating on lower floors.”
“I see.”

So then, is there certain condition for it proc?
For instance, when the attack is expected to reduce more than half of remaining HP?
Or when the attack is expected to reduce HP down to 0?
It’s undoubtedly a useful equipment.

“It receives the attack in full, without passing any pain on to the user. It’s, however, disposable. When it substitutes for you, and receives the attack, it breaks thereafter. For this reason, people who engage in close quarters combat rarely use it. It is preferred more by Wizards, and those who visit labyrinth once in a while.”

Well, it’s only logical for it to be disposable.
An item that can invalidate an attack, and not still be disposable, would be broken.
Oh well, it would be a waste to confirm the condition for it to proc, if that’s the case.

“How about someone like Roxanne, who’s expert at dodging, equip it?”
“No, master should be the one to equip it.”
“It would be a waste on someone like me, who keeps receiving enemy’s attacks.”
“I heard of a story once, about how a Misanga saved its user’s life. Master, you have to equip it no matter what.

Roxanne insists.

“I understand. We are yet to make it.”
“Umm… I’ll do my best.”
“I have trust in Sherry’s hands.”
“It’s believed that success rate is high, if Master Smith is skilled.”

I heard it earlier.

“Is that so?”
“It is believed that success rate is high, if Master Smith is skilled. The great scholar of the past, however, found no difference when he conducted experiment.”
“Really?”

Sherry replies to Roxanne.
The great scholar of the past has already conducted an experiment in that regard, it seems.
I’m not sure anymore who’s right.

“So, it’s a useless equipment?”
“It’s not useless just because it’s disposable. Misanga is the cheapest equipment in an armor shop. Because it doesn’t have any defensive capability, it’s not sought after much.”
“then there’s no regret even if it breaks?”

When a Sacrificial Misanga receives an attack, it breaks.
No matter which equipment you attach Sacrifice skill to, it’ll break upon receiving an attack.
It’s a waste attaching Sacrifice skill to a valuable equipment.

“It’s the simplest of accessories. It’s made of no more than one thread. For this reason, it’s the first thing a Master Smith makes for practice purpose.”
“Practice? Why don’t you make one too, Sherry?”
“Thank you. However, like I said earlier, Misanga don’t sell for much in armor shops. Were Master Smiths to buy thread from the guild, they would actually be incurring loss. Therefore, they visit labyrinth instead to hunt Green Caterpillars for thread. One in the morning and one in the evening, they make Misanga as part of their training.”

They can't make Misanga in bulk due to limited MP.
For this reason, they make one in the morning and one in the evening.
At the same time, they hunt in labyrinth to level up.
It seems to be a good training regimen.

"Because we had to sell Copper Swords of Obstruction, I need another sword to replace it. Can Sherry make one?"
"Umm… I'm sorry. I don't know how it happened last time, but it's not possible for now. I first need to practice making Misanga, and then gradually move to more difficult items."
"I see. So it's unreasonable to start making difficult items from get go."
"I'll try my best to be of help to you as soon as possible."

Just because you've become a Master Smith, doesn't mean you can make anything, it seems.
Is low level the issue? Or limited MP?
Because I have set Gained Experience option to 20x, Sherry will level up quickly.

"Don't worry, you have already succeeded in fusing Monster Card once. Let's go to a weapons store, and buy a sword."

On our way back from Merchant Guild, we enter a weapons store.
I look around for swords.

I can't afford to carry Durandal around with me all the time.
Because I'm not a Wizard openly, I can't carry a wand around either.
Another sword is a must.

Because I would rarely use it in action, should I just go with a Copper Sword?
Or should I go with something that looks nice because I'll be carrying it around?
Without Appraisal, I can't even tell an imitation sword from a real one.

Next up from Copper Sword should be Iron Sword.
Would an Iron Sword do?

Iron Sword | Two Handed Sword
Skills: Empty | Empty

Iron Sword | Two Handed Sword
Skill: Empty

While looking around, I see an interesting Iron Sword.
It has two empty skill slots.
Which isn't found on many.

Every Copper Sword I saw had only one skill slot.
Which means Iron Swords can have a maximum of two empty skill slots.
Just like Roxanne's Scimitar, which can have up to two skills attached to it.

Scimitar | One Handed Sword
Skill: Empty

Out of curiosity, I check one out.
It has one empty skill slot.
That's only the first. There are many others.
Two seems to be the limit for Scimitar too.

Steel Sword | Two Handed Sword
Skills: Empty | Empty | Empty

Is Steel Sword next up from Iron Sword?
Steel Swords seem to have a maximum of three empty skill slots.
There's a Damascus Steel Sword too, but it's kept in the innermost part, not on display in the shop front.
Is this the best item of this shop?

I check it out from distance. There's no empty skill slot on it.
It'll be pretty expensive from the look of it, and there's no empty skill slot either, so it's of no use to me.
Do I go with Iron Sword after all?

There's no need to make a quick jump to top tier weapons.
For now, I would just attach a suitable skill to a passable weapon. When I no longer have any need for it, I would simply sell it.
When there's a successful bid for Monster Card, I would have to sell some spare sword anyway.

I bought a Copper Sword and an Iron Sword.
Both have empty skill slots. That goes without saying.
The Iron sword, in particular, has two empty skill slots.

Having two of the same item saves space in the Item Box. Unfortunately, I realized that after having bought the swords.
In the Item Box, same items can be stacked in the same spot.
For Copper Sword and Iron Sword, however, I have to use two different spots.

Well, because I'm not short on space anyway, I don't particularly mind.

"Is Steel Sword better than Iron Sword?"

After we were out of the store, I ask Sherry.

"Yes. The order is copper > iron > steel."
"Because steel is made from iron?"
"Eh?"

Sherry suddenly comes to a halt.

"Eh?"

Oh shit! Did I say something weird again?
It's a relief that I wasn't heard inside the store.

"Err… is steel really made from iron?"
"It isn't?"
"Normally, iron and steel are both dropped by monsters."
"Is that so?"

Surprisingly, Sherry's eyes aren't cold this time.

"The great scholar of the past left the technique of making steel from iron. The technique, however, has been lost with time. There is no way of making steel from iron now. Do you know how to make it?"
"No, I don't really know the method."

Steel is made from iron after all.
I'm safe.
I'm glad I'm safe.

"Is that so? Still, steel can be made from iron after all."
"Also, is Damascus steel the same?"
"Can it be made from iron?"
"Probably. It's only speculation."

It might be different in this world, so I can't say with certainty.

"Damascus steel is dropped by Lem Golem."
"Is Damascus steel better than steel?"
"Yes. It's next only to Orichalcum."

Orichalcum?

"As one would expect."
"Do you know how to make it?"
"Not even in my imagination."

It's a legendary metal after all.
It might not even exist on earth.

It's a relief that next up from Damascus steel isn't depleted uranium.
Actually, Orichalcum might be depleted uranium itself.

"Is that so?"
"The weapons store didn't have any Orichalcum Sword."
"It can only be obtained through auction or connections. It can't be bought from an ordinary weapons shop."

It might even be the best item of the whole auction.
As one would expect of Orichalcum.

Later, we went to hunt Green Caterpillars on floor 2 of Vale town labyrinth, to stock up on thread.
We will try to make Misanga before dinner.

"Well, I'll start then."

Sherry has a thread in her hands.
She places the thread between her palms, and casts Create Armor.
While reciting the incantation, her hands start glowing.
Just like during Monster Card Fusion.

“I see. So it’s made like this.”
“It’s my first time seeing someone make an equipment.”

Roxanne is impressed as well.
The light finally subsides.

Misanga | Accessory

A Misanga appears on Sherry’s hands.
The skill seemed similar to those heard of in magical stories.
Just like Monster Card Fusion, it consumes MP.
The materials are converted directly into equipment through magic.

“Is there no possibility of failing when making accessories?”
“If you don’t first gain experience by making simple items, you’ll fail in trying to make difficult items, even if you’re skilled.”

Sherry answers.
Her remaining MP seems to be adequate.
That’s expected, considering she’s Master Smith Lv6 now, unlike last time.

“Is that so?”

I receive the Misanga.
Although it was made through a skill, it’s only a braided thread.
Plain.
Should I wear it on my wrist or ankle?

“A Master Smith is considered successful only when they can make a Sacrificial Misanga from a Misanga on their first attempt.”
“Really?”
“That’s just a popular belief among Master Smiths, nothing more.”
“Popular belief?”

So it's like that.
Unfortunately, the Misanga Sherry made just now doesn't have any empty skill slot.
In other words, she can't make a Sacrificial Misanga from this Misanga.

According to what Sherry said, a Master Smith is considered successful, if they can make a Sacrificial Misanga from a Misanga on their first attempt, and aren't considered successful, if they can't make a Sacrificial Misanga on their first attempt. However…
However, what if they first make one with empty skill slot, and then make Sacrificial Misanga? Would they be considered successful in that case, if they make a Sacrificial Misanga on their first attempt?

If not, Sherry would be called a failure.

Sherry isn't a failure.
She is absolutely not a failure.
Sherry is so cute, she can't be a failure.
Sherry is undoubtedly an excellent Master Smith.

"Even Monster Card Fusion isn't successful every time for a Master Smith. To make a Sacrificial Misanga from a Misanga on first attempt is purely luck. It has no relation whatsoever to whether a Master Smith is successful or not."

If a Master Smith had 100% success rate of making equipment with empty skill slots, their Monster Card Fusion success rate would be 100% as well. Because fusion would be successful, if they make such an equipment.

That fact, however, isn't known to other people.
Because that fact isn't known to them, they don't realize how absurd it is for a Master Smith to successfully make equipment with empty skill slots 100% of the time.
Every Master Smith probably has certain success rate of making equipment with empty skill slots. I'm, however, not concerned about that.

"Because this is the first equipment Sherry made, I'll have this for myself."
"But it's only a Misanga, it doesn't have any defensive power."
"It's useless?"
"No! Umm… thank you. If you wear it, I'll be really happy."

Sherry lowers her head.

Still, that popular belief is unsettling.
If someone says ‘I’ll curse you,’ you would be worried, even though you know there’s no such thing as curse.
If you’re alone in the dark, you would be afraid of ghosts, even though you know there aren’t any.

Let’s hope we can get a Misanga with empty skill slot, before we get Caterpillar Monster Card.
So I thought, even though I know that a wish rarely comes true.
Is it really useless?

I wrap the Misanga Sherry made around my right ankle.
I tie a bowknot, to make it easy to untie.

Kaga Michio | Male | 17 years old
Explorer Lv 33 | Hero Lv31 | Wizard Lv33 | Monk Lv32
Equipment: Leather Boots | Misanga

If it could have the skill attached, it would receive enemy’s attack in my stead, giving me a shot at victory.

Chapter 61 - Genghis Kahn

Today's dinner is a Mongolian mutton barbecue.

TN: There is apparently a Japanese mutton & vegetable dish named after Genghis Kahn.

We don't have the special pan for it, but it's a Mongolian mutton barbecue.
We don't have the special sauce for it, but it's a Mongolian mutton barbecue.
We have the goat meat that we got from defeating the boss, it's a Mongolian mutton barbecue.

We prepared two sheets of iron, and a wooden stand.
One sheet of iron is put on the wooden stand, an arrangement of stones is put on it, and the second sheet of iron is placed on that. Charcoal is put between the plates.
The charcoal is set on fire, and the meat and vegetables are cooked on the top plate.

It looks like Teppanyaki. TN: Japanese cooking on a steel plate.
I'm really very thankful.

It's a Mongolian mutton barbecue.
Even though I used an original fish sauce, and a different kind of meat, it's a Mongolian mutton barbecue.

Since I said that it's a Mongolian mutton barbecue, today's dish is Genghis Khan.
The vegetables have been seasoned with the juices from the meat, so it's roughly about right.

"It's finally done."
"Thank you, Master."
"Thank you."

When it's cooked, I serve it up.
It's my duty as Master to serve meat.
I'm like a cool parent.
Well, neither Roxanne nor Sherry can use chopsticks.

We have a stew which Roxanne made, a soup that Sherry made, and the bread that I bought.
You could say that it tasted quite good.
Yesterdays adventures became today's provisions.

"It's delicious."

Since Roxanne said the taste was good, today's meal is a Mongolian mutton barbecue.
TN: In case anyone didn't notice, it's a Mongolian mutton barbecue. :P
The meat and vegetables are both delicious.
Grilled meat on the dinner table, and two beautiful women to talk to, while enjoying the Genghis Kahn.
It's a luxury the same level as Lieutenant General Mutaguchi had with his Geisha's on the battlefield of Maymjou.

"Why did you become a slave Sherry? Can you tell me?"
"Well…"
"Ah, you don't have to talk about it if you don't want to."

I casually asked about it in the conversation.
They don't seem to have had the same problem as Roxanne, since they had books in their house.
I think this time it's okay to ask.

"My older brother was injured in the Labyrinth."
"An injury?"
"My father doesn't have much talent, so my older brother was relied on as the income for my house."

Sherry's grandfather seems to have been quite good and prosperous.
Sherry's father ruined things, he might not have had talent, and might have lost respect since he brought on the family's downfall.

"We went into debt to buy medicine for the injury."
"Can't the injury be cured if you buy a high ranking ointment?"

I agree with Roxanne's opinion.

“That’s right. I believe they sold me to cover the amount spent on the medicine.”
“They couldn’t stay in debt?”
“When you borrow money, paying it back becomes difficult. A little debt can become bad pretty quick. I didn’t want that to happen to my house.”

That’s how it is?
You can’t get out once you’re in.
The interest rates must be high, and the collection methods severe.

“It’s a house like that.”
“When you borrow money once, you need it straight away, it’s a small amount of money at first, but it becomes big if you don’t repay it quickly. If it gets like that your family will fall apart, thus it was suggested that I become a slave before it got that far.”
“Did you suggest it yourself?”
“Yes.”

It was the rational choice?
Thinking about the situation, it was probably one of the best options.

“That’s great.”
“Yes, it was the best option. I had already failed to become a Master Smith, and a Shrine Maiden. I could also learn Brahim if I became a slave since most of the people who buy them speak Brahim.”
“Brahim?”

That’s an advantage to becoming a slave?
In this world, if you can speak Brahim, you can get a variety of jobs.
For Sherry, the chance to learn Brahim after becoming a slave is a benefit.

“My younger brother & younger sister are still small, and the older brother that supports the family can’t be sold, so it’s the best option to sell me.”

Can’t your father be sold?
Or did the father say that a daughter without talent would sell at a better price?

“I see, well you’re part of our family now, so please do your best in the future.”
“Of course. Thank you for looking after me.”

Roxanne just treats it like it's natural.
Get more meat. Eat meat.
I pass some meat to Roxanne.

The Genghis Kahn seems to be quite popular.
I'd notice if there was a decrease in anyone's health.
The three of us continue to eat until we run out of food.

It's sad that we don't have any Chow Mein to go with the meal.
I didn't think of it, I could have prepared some earlier.
There are noodles like pasta in this world.
If I used those, there's a good chance I could make it.

I'm not sure if I could make Chow Mein by adding the fish sauce to the pasta.
Thinking about a failed dish gives me a fright.
I'll have to be careful when I try it.

"No need to thank me. Come to think of it, is explorer a good job for a slave's master?""

I was curious about it when I bought her.
Roxanne said it was good, but is it really?

"Um, is it fine to say it?"
"It's fine, because he's our Master."

Roxanne supports her.
Is it hard to talk about?
Will they try and change the subject?
Is it hard to say something bad about your Master to your Master?

"Well, there are three things that a slave wants for a good place to work."
"Three?"
"The first is to be bought by a millionaire. It's the most liked and you'll do your best to get a position there. The treatment and environment are normally good, and slaves in places with large numbers of slaves have a chance to get a better standing."

Maybe in places with large numbers of slaves, some are given the job of directing the work of the other slaves.
A different job like a warden or something.
Is it like comparing a large company to a small or medium size company?
Is it something different?

How about the first slave in a place with only two slaves?

“Oh, I heard that too.”
“Roxanne as well?”

Since Roxanne and Sherry both came from the same place, it isn’t surprising if they have heard the same things.

“I’m not sure exactly, but there’s a good chance of becoming a concubine. If you become a very wealthy concubine then you can live a carefree life.”

Yes.
Roxanne, I’m extremely happy I got you.

You need to be good looking to become a concubine.
The slave trader was probably trying to promote Roxanne as a concubine.
Thus Roxanne would have heard that story.

“Well. It would be nice to be bought by a millionaire, but a lot of luck would be necessary for that to happen.”

I return the conversation back to the original story.

“Of course it’s quite rare. People who become a slave like to have hope, there’s a lot of people who dream of being a rich person’s favorite.”
“Escaping from reality?”

To stand out from the large number of slaves, ability and fate might be necessary.
If you’ve become a slave, you have no luck.

“Another good position is being bought by someone who has lost their wife, instead of looking for a new wife.”
“There’s stories like that as well?”

“If you re-marry you might have trouble with succession and inheritance. If you buy a slave from a different race then you won’t have that problem. Your children will recommend that you buy a slave to avoid trouble.”
“Like a nurse maid?”

They have that problem in this world.
The family has money because they can buy a slave.
Later on there will be troubles with inheritance.

“When the person in question dies, they will often free you from slavery in their will. Someone buying a slave as a second wife looks for a certain age. Slaves who have been worked for a long time are not that beneficial to re-sell.”
“That seems a reasonable choice.”
“People who become Masters are normally successful, calm people, and looking after them in the future isn’t bad.”

You’d be troubled if you treated someone meant to look after you badly, so they probably get good treatment.
Otherwise they’d get revenge on you if you became bedridden.

When you become senile, you’d like a slave to look after you.
You don’t want a slave stealing your money.
A slave who has been treated bad will probably treat you bad.

However, I don’t think that someone suffering dementia would live long in this world with their medical care environment.
It’s not like modern Japan.

“Finally, Third is when a slave is bought for the Labyrinth.”
“There’s quite a difference with the others.”

Well, it’s still a natural choice.

“Slaves for the Labyrinth aren’t much different to other slaves at first, however they will improve their strength and combat techniques quickly. It’s hard work, but they won’t be treated badly either.”
“I see.”

Slaves who work on farms or in mines aren't worth as much without skills in the trade.
There's not much chance to earn anything from their Master either.

Slaves who enter the Labyrinth have a definite path of improvement.
And it's not impossible for them to surpass their Master's.
Actually, they'd always be in the same party.

If their level goes up, their strength goes up, and their treatment gets better.
There's less chance of dying in the Labyrinth if you get stronger, and getting rid of a slave after you've put effort in to making them stronger isn't a good idea.
Even if the slaves level is in the single digits, eventually they will still go up to 40 or 50.
The change is that big.

"Only because it's you, I'll tell you that if a slave who isn't treated right becomes strong then they might approach other people asking for them to buy them."

There's a trick like that as well?
Then I need to look after my workers.

That's how things are here.

"In other words, in the future I'll have to look after you two well."
"No, no. I only mentioned it because it's you, Master. I don't have any interest in talking to approaching other people."
"No, me neither."

Roxanne and Sherry's level will go up fast.
Replacing them with other slaves would be difficult.
It's also not profitable to replace them.

"I would rather die than be bought by someone other than Master."
"Me too."

A replacement would not be at the same level of strength, and income would change.
If strength changes, our progress would go backwards.

“I am very happy with my treatment.”
“Yes, I am too.”

It’s bad.
I’m indebted to Roxanne.
I wouldn’t have gotten this far without her.
How will things go in the future?

“It would still be fine even if the treatment was worse.”
“That’s right.”

There’s no such thing.
A slave who surpasses their Master shouldn’t exist.
It’s not real, it’s not real, it’s not real.

“Well, about the treatment of you two, I want to review it.”
“Yes, Master.”
“Certainly.”
“I’ll look at it quite thoroughly.”

It might be good to give their treatment a review.
Having two people, I am painfully aware that I am the Master.

“First of all, eating the same food as Master is very good treatment.”
“Not really, you’d be unable to fight if you didn’t eat.”

It’s just smart.

“Normally we wouldn’t eat together.”
“That wouldn’t be efficient.”
“Normally Master would be seated at the table, and we’d eat off the floor.”

From the floor.
Is that normal?

“That seems like a hassle.”
“Then, cloths. Normally we’d wear worn out cloths.”
“That’s true. Our cloths are too nice for a slave to wear.”
“The cloths? I got them because Roxanne & Sherry are beautiful.”

They sigh.

“Ah, Thank you Master.”
“Thank you.”
“Cloths don’t count. I’m happy to keep you beautiful. It isn’t to show off to others, I’m dressing you up to please myself.”

I shake my head.

“Thank you, but the cloths and food don’t count.”
“Then the living area.”

The living area.
From food, clothing & housing, the first two don’t count, so only housing remains.

I display my pride as a Master with my house.
The house is enough to make two people think of me as Master.
In my house, I can show off being the Master.
Here they can see things from my perspective.

“What about it?”
“Sleeping in the same bed as the Master is amazing.”

What… huh…?

“…that’s not counted.”
“It’s amazing to be able to take a bath with Master.”

Why?

“No… that doesn’t count either.”
“It’s also amazing that Master would wash a slaves body with soap.”

Well.
That’s my enjoyment every day.
Why wouldn’t I do it?

“Nope… doesn’t count.”
“Then, there’s more.”

Stop Roxanne! My HP's dropped to zero!

"Yes. Well, after reviewing the treatment of you two I want to make a notification."
"There will be no change to the current treatment."
"I'll keep it in mind for the future though."
"We'll review it again some time, and it was good that we reviewed it now."

My head aches from trying to follow Sherry.

Chapter 62 - Day off

Next evening. We are at Quratar town Adventurer Guild to sell some items.
The lady at the reception calls out to us.

“Excuse me. Are you an adventurer?”

What is it about? I wonder.
Whatever it is about, l’ll just deny it.
So I thought, but then I reconsider.

I always use the wall of this Adventurer Guild for Warp.
This reception lady must’ve seen it too.
Only Field Walk, a skill exclusive to adventurers, uses walls. Therefore, I must be an adventurer.

“Yes, but I’m not a member of the guild.”
“That shouldn’t be a problem. Actually, the Harz duchy in the north has seen heavy rain in recent days, resulting in massive flood. To transport relief supplies, they’ve solicited the strength of adventurers. Due to urgency of the request, however, we aren’t able to muster up enough numbers. Would you be willing to lend us your strength?

Disaster relief?
Because I’m not an adventurer, I want to decline. However…
However, I visit Quratar town Adventurer Guild everyday. It won’t be good for me to be seen as a selfish person.
Well, shouldn’t I help out with disaster relief then?

The only problem is, they may ask to check my Intelligence Card.
If they check it out, they’ll find out that I’m not an adventurer.
Because the matter concerns a guild and a duchy, background check of the participants shouldn’t come by as a surprise.
Well, shouldn’t I just avoid this unnecessary risk then?

“Well…”
“…Umm”

I look behind me. Roxanne is pushing at my back.
I'm trying to decline, but…
But the atmosphere tells me not to.

Sherry smiles wryly.
Because she knows that I'm not an adventurer.

"The guild has arranged for an allowance of 1,000 Nar for one day, that is tomorrow.
"That's not the problem. Exactly what kind of work are we required to do?"
"To transport relief supplies to the villages that have their routes cut off due to flood. That shouldn't be difficult for adventurers. The guild has asked for security from the Harz duchy. The order of Harz duchy knights will be responsible for safety of the adventurers. Security, therefore, shouldn't be a concern either."

Although villages and towns in this world may seem to be to some extent, they're not completely self-sufficient.
That merchant too, from the village where I first woke up in this world, procures various items from Vale town.
The transportation system here shouldn't be as advanced as modern Japan's.
When disaster strikes, it collapses.

That's when adventurers come into the fray.
Even if routes have been cut off, adventurers can transport supplies through Field Walk.
Quite a facility, if you ask me.

"Hmm…"
"Elves normally look down upon humans. However, the identity of the participants of disaster relief doesn't matter."

Oh, so my identity won't be questioned.
That matters to me the most.

When you're struck with disaster.
You accept help, regardless of where it comes from.
I have no idea why elves look down upon humans, but the identity of the participants won't come into question.
Apparently, there's a majority of elves in the Harz duchy.

That I'm a human, however, concerns me the least.
But the reception lady probably thinks that I'm concerned about that.

If they won't require me to tell them of my background, I don't have any problem with accepting to participate.
There's no apparent difference between Warp and Field Walk. If they don't look at my Intelligence Card, I won't stand out.
In fact, if I refuse to help out in an emergency situation such as this, I may come into notice.

"I understand. What do I have to do?"
"Please gather here tomorrow in the morning after breakfast. The duke of Harz will have all the supplies and staff arranged for. It would be preferable for the adventurer to come alone. Please free up your Item Box as much as you can before coming here. Capacity of about 1,000 items should be enough. Transportation of supplies should be over by the evening."
1,000 items?
I'm afraid that Explorer alone won't suffice. If need be, I'll add Cook, Weapons Merchant and Armor Merchant.
Because of multiple jobs, I'm not worried about capacity.

I can't help but think it over.
I'm not doing this out of goodwill.
It'll be better for them to ask someone who'll be happy in helping others.

We return home, and decide on the plan for tomorrow at dinner.

"Tomorrow, I'll be away on commission from Adventurer Guild. After early morning exploration in Quratar town labyrinth, you two will be free for the rest of the day. It'll be best in my opinion. What do you think, Roxanne?
"A day off?"
"Yes, let's do it."
"…A-Ah, certainly. Thank you."

Roxanne is lost in thought.

"Would Sherry like to go visit the library?"
"Eh? But I can't afford it…"
"I'll give you the entrance fee and the deposit."
"Are you sure?"

She asks me anxiously.
Deposit is 1 gold coin, if I remember.
But that's fine because the deposit will be returned upon leaving the library.
I would be reluctant, if 1 gold coin were the entrance fee.

"It's fine, as long as the deposit gets returned."
"Th-Thank you."

Sherry lowers her head.
Her voice, however, was lively.
Sherry said earlier that she wanted to go there.
I'm really happy.

"What would you like to do, Roxanne? Anything is fine. You don't have to decide right now. You have tomorrow as well."
"Because I want to be of help to master, like Sherry, I will train after returning from the labyrinth."
"No, no, Roxanne is already a big help to me."
"Thank you."
"If possible, rest. Don't try to do anything dangerous."

To be able to hunt in labyrinth, you need training.
Because I have a person such as Roxanne, however, I don't need training.
Also, she gets 20 times as much experience with me, so she doesn't have go to higher floors alone.
It'll be dangerous, if she goes to higher floors alone, and gets in trouble.

"Okay, then I'll just do the cleaning as usual, and relax at home."
"Please do that. Also, I'll give you an allowance, so you can go shopping too."

Roxanne is fond of shopping.
She may enjoy her time tomorrow, if she goes shopping.

"Allowance?"
"Sherry, would 5 silver coins be enough for entrance fee?"
"I heard it's 100 Nar."
"I'll give 500 Nar to both of you. Use it however you like."

My allowance for tomorrow's commission is 10 silver coins.
It's a lot now that I think about it.
It could be lower than the going rate because it's disaster relief, but they're

hiring adventurers specifically, so the rate is high.
A half of that is more than enough for me for a day.

“Are you fine with it?”
“It’s fine. Roxanne has been a great help, so she’s free to do anything tomorrow.”
“Thank you, master.”

They may act carelessly, if there’s too much. On the other hand, they may get in trouble, if there’s too less.
With 5 silver coins, they can’t buy something really expensive, but they can buy enough.
It’s reasonable amount.

That night, they talked between them till really late.
It looked like they were having fun.
Because they were happy, I was happy too.

It’s morning now. I kiss Roxanne first as usual.

“Good morning, Roxanne. You’re always early to rise.”
“Yes, because I have to do the most important thing first in the morning.”

I have an idea what that most important thing is.
It might sound bad, but it’s actually something good.
Followed by Roxanne, I kiss Sherry.

“Thank you. You two stayed up quite late last night. Is everything alright?”
“Umm… did we trouble you?”
“Ah, no. Actually, your chat sounds like a lullaby to me.”
“So there’s no problem with staying up to talk.”

Afterward, we went to Quratar town labyrinth. Then after breakfast, I prepared to leave.
About Needle Wood, it shot magic only once.
Roxanne dodged it brilliantly.
And so, we avoided it without any trouble.

Sherry makes two Misanga in a day, one in the morning and one in the evening. By now, she has made four in total. She has yet to make one with empty skill slot.

“Well then, here’s 5 silver coins.”
“Okay. Then I’ll give 3 to Sherry because she has to pay the entrance fee.”

When I give Roxanne silver coins, she divides them between Sherry and herself.

“Ah, no. These are all yours. Sherry will get her own 5 silver coins.”
“Eh? That’s too much. Are you sure?”

They seem to think that 5 silver coins are for two people.

“It’s fine.”
“Thank you.”
“But the library entrance fee isn’t that much.”
“Sherry will spend all day reading, so you may get thirsty. You can use it then.”

I go to Sherry, and tell her.
Are 5 silver coins a lot?
I don’t understand the standards.

The cheapest room at the inn in Vale town costed me around 300 Nar.
Luxurious rooms would surely cost around 500 Nar.
500 Nar isn’t even enough for more than one day’s stay and meals.
Isn’t it actually less?

“Shouldn’t you be putting a cloak on?”

While I was lost in thought, Sherry advises me.
Why?
Was what I thought, but then I remembered.
It’s not raining here in Quratar town, but it’s flooding elsewhere due to heavy rain.

I didn’t notice it at all.
Of course it would be raining there.

What would people think of someone who's part of disaster relief team in an area flooded with heavy rain without a cloak?
I was so close to disgracing myself.

"That's right. Thank you."
"Here, master."

Roxanne goes to the closet inside, and comes back with a cloak.
That's the cloak I bought back then.
I hand the key to the house over to Roxanne.
Because I always use Warp, this key is hardly ever used.

"Well, I'm off then."
"Have a nice day."

I put the cloak on, leave the house in Roxanne's care, and go to the Imperial Capital with Sherry.
At Adventurer Guild, I ask around for the location of, and then leave for the library.

The Imperial Capital's library was a white building made of marble.
A grand, elegant structure.
Magnificent.
As magnificent as a palace.

"Amazing."
"It surely is."

Sherry admires it in awe, and I agree.
It's in total contrast to Japan, where the government constructs buildings with minimalist exterior, but superb interior facilities.
Because it was in the Imperial Capital, however, it wouldn't only be the appearance that's magnificent.

Inside, there was a large lobby.
There was a wall to the side where adventurers were going in and coming out from.
Field Walk can be used from there, it seems.

Further in, there was reception desk.
Entrance fee seems to be collected there.
Opposite to the reception desk was reading room.

“Thank you.”
“I’ll come pick you up from there in the evening. You’re free to use your time however you like. Once you spend some time here, you’ll get used to this place.”

I point to a location near the reading room.
Quratar town is in the west of the Imperial Capital.
When it’s sunset in Quratar town, it’ll be evening here.

“I understand.”

I see Sherry off until she was in the library.
She pays the fee at the reception, and enters safely.
Having confirmed it, I leave for Adventurer Guild in Quratar town using the wall in the library.

Disaster relief itself had no problems in particular.
We first gathered at Bode town, which is situated in the centre of the duchy.
From Bode town, I teleported to local villages with the adventurers of the Harz duchy.
Afterward, I added one of the duchy knights to the party, and transported supplies to the villages.

Since the supplies and staff were already arranged for by the duke, adventurers had not much to do.
The only thing they had to do was to use Field Walk.
In my case, it was Warp.
Because we were reciprocating between the imperial palace and the buildings in the villages, there was no need for cloak.

Except for some items, like rabbit meat, which needed to be carried in the Item Box, other supplies were to transported through Field Walk as luggage.
For this reason, I couldn’t use the technique of partial body transfer to exchange goods.
Consequently, I had to make countless round trips.

The supplies which were to be carried in the Item Box were closely monitored.
It's not like I wanted to misappropriate those goods.
And there was a knight too with me.
Even if I wanted to, I couldn't do anything out of norm without getting my identity verified.

It's finally time to rest after making about a dozen round trips between the imperial palace and the villages.
I sit down on a chair to take some rest.
As expected, there was a clear decrease in my MP after using warp more than 20 times consecutively.
I lean sloppily on the chair.

There are many elves in the order of Harz duchy knights.
Handsome men and beautiful women.
Every one of them.
Damn it! All good-looking men should just go die.

There's a female elf of around 60 in my party. Even though she's beautiful, I can't just go and pull her into my embrace.
It would've been dangerous, had I selected Sex Maniac job.
They should've verified identity of the participants after all.

She's a beautiful woman with a youthful face. Although she's slim, she has just the right amount of meat in all the right places.
She's 58 years old.
She totally doesn't look that age from her appearance.
I look forward to 58 years old Roxanne.

While I was staring at the granny elf from my chair, someone comes in from the back.
Patrol?

The duke of Harz, Brocken North Braun Anhalt | Male | 35 years old
Holy Knight Lv14
Equipment: Orichalcum Sword | Sacrificial Misanga

Wha-
He's the duke!

He's a holy knight!
He has Orichalcum Sword!

Because of the hood of his cloak, I can't see his face.
He's walking about idly.
He has no attendants either.
Because he's inside the palace?

Did he come here for inspection?
I wonder if I should be leaning sloppily on my chair in front of the duke.
It may look bad.
Although I don't know etiquette of this world, I understand at least that much.

I stand up in a hurry, and bow.
Was it impolite?
I'm scared.

"To recognize me, even though I'm incognito — excellent, anonymous."

The duke approaches me, and whispers.
So as not to alert others.
I did something unnecessary, I guess.

To act rashly based only on Appraisal was a mistake.
He was patrolling incognito, it seems.
Because I was gestured so, I sit back down.

"Have you seen me before somewhere?"

The duke sits down next to me.
I have attracted unwanted attention.
Although he came here with his face hidden under the hood of his cloak, I bowed to him.
Had I not bowed, I wouldn't have been noticed.

"Ah, yes. Before…"
"I see."

I try to deceive him desperately. He simply withdraws.
It's not strange for a person such as duke to be seen before.
Actually, it would be bad for a lord to not show his face to his people.

"Your Excellency!"

Someone comes running in.

"Unfortunately, we can't talk here. Let's go elsewhere."

The duke confirms his surroundings, and leaves.
I seem to have been noticed when I bowed.

If possible, I don't want to follow him.
The duke advances quickly, in steady steps.

"I'm called Gozer, the leader of the order of Harz duchy knights. This way, please."

The man, who came running in, introduces himself.
He's an elf.
His ears are pointed.
And, of course, he's good-looking.

Cool.
Not only does he look cool, the way he acts is cool as well.
I wish I were cool too.
I wish I were dead.

Gozer North Braun Anhalt | Male | 46 years old
Grand Wizard Lv61
Equipment: Staff of Offerings | Sacrificial Misanga

As you would expect from the leader knight.
His level is quite high.
And he's not just any Wizard.
Is that an upgraded job?

"Okay."

The good-looking leader knight has asked me.
I have to go.
I can't turn someone like him down.

"I will be borrowing adventurer-dono for a while.
"Understood."

The leader knight informs the knight who was in my party.
We follow the duke.
The duke leaves the room, and quickly advances through the corridor.

There are some torches here and there in an otherwise dark corridor.
It would be darker than even labyrinth without torches.
Is it alright for them to let an anonymous adventurer visit such a place?
And I'm not even an adventurer.

After walking for a while, the duke opens a door, and goes in.
The room isn't large, but is luxurious, and fully carpeted.
On the side, there's sofa and a table. In the front, there's a desk and chairs.
It looks kind of like a president's office.

"We are in the room now. Suit yourself."
"Thank you."

What's that?
To be allowed to see such a beautiful face, I'm extremely delighted.

I sit on the sofa.
Having taken off his cloak, the duke sit's on the chair by the desk.

He's an elf.
He's handsome.
Cool.

I don't know why do I have such a face.
I really should just die.

"It's a private room, so don't be courteous. Be your usual self."
"V-Very well."

“I dislike ceremonial words even more. You don’t have to be so polite.”
“Yes, I’m grateful.”

More formal words are coming out.
Whatever, it’s getting translated that way.

“I’m grateful to disaster relief team for their assistance this time. I sincerely thank you.”
“Not at all.”
“This time around, raining season has coincided with snowmelt, resulting in greater damage.”

I see.
Is there flooding every year due to snowmelt?
Is that why the supplies and staff were arranged for so efficiently?

“Excuse my intrusion.”

When I was having conversation with the duke, the leader knight enters.

“Gozer? Have a seat.”
“Thank you. We are grateful to you for assisting us this time.”

Gozer bows his head, and goes to sit across from me.

“Are you fine with inviting an adventurer to the duke’s room?”

I try to confirm with the leader knight.

“We are inside the palace. In but a call, someone would rush immediately in. Also, both the duke and I are wearing Sacrificial Misanga, so assassination is highly unlikely.”
“Ah, I see.”

Sacrificial Misanga will receive first attack, if it’s life threatening.
In the meantime, guards will rush in, and prevent the second.
So it’s not necessary to always be guarded in the imperial palace.

“The nobility have the duty to rid their territory of labyrinths. If I can’t even take an attack from the front, I don’t have any right to keep the title, do I?”
“Ah, no. I didn’t mean that.”

What is this handsome guy even talking about?
Well, I did think about that, but…

“Even the best of the adventurers might lose to His Excellency.”
“No, I’m not that good.”
“Your Excellency?”

The duke tries to cover it up.
Because he knows that it’s mere flattery.

“Transportation of supplies to Tare village seems to have finished.”
“Tare?”
“Tare village is the farthest from here in the territory. As you may already know, Field Walk to far off places is strenuous. For this reason, I assigned three adventurers to Tare village alone. One of them has finished, but two are yet to reach half-way mark.”

The knight leader explains to me.
So it has finished?
Is that why you’re taking rest?

From what the knight leader just said, MP consumption of Field Walk varies depending on the distance.
Going to far off places takes more MP.
It’s natural to take breaks.

Is the MP consumption of Warp not dependent on the distance?
Or do I have a lot more MP compared to other adventurers because of Explorer, Hero, Wizard, Weapons Merchant, Armor Merchant and Cook.
If I remove Wizard job, my MP will reduce significantly.

Was it unnecessary to select these many jobs?
I thought of removing Hero job, but I kept it for contingencies.
Overwhelming will be vital in case of a surprise attack.
I can’t even begin to think of removing Wizard job.

It's believed that effects such as 'Increase in Strength' are shared with all party members. Sherry and Roxanne, however, never noticed it.
So there shouldn't be any problem of getting exposed.
I don't think I'll get in trouble over that.

"You seem to be of human race."
"Ah, yes."
"Humans are quite talented."

The duke seems to be misunderstanding something.

"Yes, they certainly are."
"How about you join the order of Harz duchy knights?"
"I'm afraid I can't. I'm still in training."

I decline his offer in a hurry.
I'll get myself in trouble. I'm already working as an adventurer, even though I'm not one.
Don't elves hate humans anyway?

"Is that so? It's alright. Actually, the knight leader Gozer came up with this idea. As you may already know, elves dislike humans. For this reason, there are many fallouts between them. Having humans in the order of knights will help us out in such situations."

So that was the original plan.
The duke seems to be a simple person.
That's a relief.
How can a duke look down upon his own people?
But there's a connection between the duke and the order of knights too.
I might've been a little hasty in selling the Copper Swords of Obstruction. I could sell the swords here.

"Well then, we will certainly have more opportunities to meet in the future."

I try to end the conversation, and stand up.
The more this drags on, the more my ignorance will show itself.

"Certainly. Sorry to have kept you for long."
"You have completed your job. It won't be a problem for you to return."

It really seems to have finished.
The knight leader sees me off to the room where I originally was.
Afterward, I leave the duchy of Harz for home.

“Welcome back, master.”

Having returned home in the afternoon, ahead of schedule, I’m greeted by Roxanne.
In maid costume.

Dog-eared maid.
So pretty.
So amazingly pretty.

“I-I’m home, Roxanne.”
“Yes. It’s earlier than expected.”

She looks same as when I saw her for the first time.
No, not really. She was wearing a cap that time.
In other words, it’s my first time seeing her as dog-eared maid.

Maid outfit, beautiful face and dog ears on top.
Ears that are soft and flabby.
Face that’s looking at me with a brilliant smile.
Body that’s wrapped neatly in maid outfit.

Although the outfit is elegant, it’s unable to hide the suppleness of that which is underneath.
Soft and supple.
Although the frilled apron is curved gently to hide the chest, it is only accentuating that which it is supposed to cover.

“I finished quicker than I thought.”
“As expected of master.”

Roxanne goes to my back, and takes my cloak off.
It tickles.

“Thank you. What happened to your clothes?”
“Is there something wrong with this? You’re supposed to wear this type of clothes when doing household chores, like cleaning. Or so I’ve heard.”

No, there’s nothing wrong with this.
There’s nothing wrong with this, but there’s something wrong indeed.
The cloak that’s sticking to your bosom.

“You are looking cute.”
“Th-Thank you.”

Cute.
So cute.
So amazingly cute.

I want to cling to her.
I want to eat her.
I want to eat all of her.

I can’t, however, for she’s on her period.
I can hug her at least.
I pull Roxanne into my embrace.

“I knew Roxanne’s the best.”
“Th-Thank you. Luke’s messenger came here while you were away. There was a successful bid of Mermaid Monster Card, it seems.”
“Is that so? Let’s go meet him tomorrow.”

Alas.
When I cling to Roxanne, I feel the suppleness of her chest.
I can’t endure anymore.
It’s better to not hug her.

When I try to separate my body from hers, she whispers into my ear.

“‘It’ is over now, so I’m able to receive your affection again.”

I lift Roxanne up out of reflex.
I rest her shoulders on my left arm, and scoop her legs with my right.

I lift Roxanne up in my arms to carry her to the bed.
I can do 'it'. What a surprise.

We went straight to the bed. What happened thereafter, needs not be mentioned.

It was already past the time I agreed with Sherry.
I hurriedly went to Adventurer Guild to receive my allowance, and then rushed to the library.
The wall in the library was more crowded at this time than in the morning.

"My bad. Have you been waiting for long?"
"Not at all. I only just came out."
"Well, I'm glad then."

I was late in coming here, but the timing was just about right.
Sherry comes running to me.

"Library remains open until the sun sets. This…"
"Hmm? Did you drink alcohol?"

Sherry returns the deposit. She reeks of alcohol.
And it's intense.

"Yes, water. About 5 cups."
"Water?"
"It's a weak liquor, so dwarves often take it in place of water. For this reason, we call it water. It's not that strong. It's distilled only three times."

Only three times.
Doesn't the level of alcohol rise with each distillation?
From the smell of it, it's undoubtedly not a weak liquor.

Does Sherry like alcohol?

I don't drink alcohol.
There's some wine at home, but it's only for use in cooking.
Because I don't drink alcohol, Roxanne and Sherry don't drink it either.
Shouldn't they have told me at least, if that were so?

“No, I don’t particularly like alcohol. I took it only as a substitute for water.”
“I don’t drink alcohol, so I don’t have it at home. Are you okay with that?”
“Yes, because I don’t particularly like to drink alcohol.”

It’s futile to discuss it with a person who uses alcohol as a substitute for water, and reeks of alcohol.

Still, she doesn’t seem drunk.
Shes walking steadily, and speaking fluently.
The party invitation i sent was immediately accepted as well.
She seems to have a strong head for alcohol.

Well, whatever.

We use the wall of the library, and return home.

“Welcome home, master. Is that alcohol?”

Roxanne greets me.
This time, however, not as a maid.
She has changed from her maid outfit.

She immediately notices the smell of alcohol.
It isn’t all that surprising though, considering she locates the monsters in labyrinth from their smell.

“I’m home. She took it in place of water.”
“I’m home.”
“Err… is it okay for you to cook?”
“It’s okay. I didn’t take enough to get drunk.”

Sure enough, she doesn’t seem drunk.

“How much does Sherry have to take to get drunk?”
“Now that I think about it, I was slightly drunk when it was decided that I would sell myself. All my family decided to drink that time. We bought barrels of the strongest liquor, and I took considerable amount of it.”

She took considerable amount of the strongest liquor, and was only slightly drunk.

She said that all of her family decided to drink that time. Doesn't she have younger siblings?
Dwarves seem to have a strong head for alcohol.

It was perhaps her last memorable moment with her family.
She definitely likes alcohol, but keeps denying it in front of me. Shouldn't I just force her to drink then?

Sherry prepared dinner properly.
She really doesn't seem to be drunk.

"So, did Roxanne go for shopping?"

I ask at dinner.

"Yes, before master came back."
"You did?"

I'm glad.
But it's not the best of the places to kill time.

"I bought clothes for master."
"Clothes for me?"
"Yes, please accept it."
"Ah, you didn't have to do that for me."
"I bought a hairbrush too. It'll be for both Sherry and I to use."

Brush?
It's certainly a necessary item.
Because I don't use it, however, there was none in the house.

"Thank you, Roxanne-san."
"I'm sorry for not noticing it. If there's anything you need, don't hesitate to tell me."
"Not at all. Here, this is the remaining amount."
"U-Um… I'm sorry. I have used it all up."

Sherry has used all of it?
That's our Sherry for you.

“It’s your allowance, keep it. You may spend it on something at a later time.”
“Are you fine with it?”
“It’s fine.”
“Thank you, master.”

You may get stranded somewhere.
You’ll need 1 silver coin to come back to Quratar town.

“So Sherry, did you read books?”
“Yes. I read about Monster Card Fusion, and noted down different Monster Cards and respective skills. I used my allowance to buy a notebook and some pencils.”

Both of them seem to have spent their day off in a meaningful way.

Chapter 63 - Skill Slot

Morning.
Sherry no longer smells of alcohol.
Although I lick her mouth thoroughly, I can't trace any alcohol.
When I entwine my tongue with hers, and exchange saliva, it tastes like it usually does.

I move my tongue around, and enjoy the softness.
Sherry pushes her tongue into my mouth, and swirls it around.
She's still clumsy, but she's doing it on her own now at least.
After keeping our tongues entwined for some time, I let go of her mouth.

"Good morning, Sherry. Does your head hurt?"
"No, I'm all fine."

I thought that there would be some of it left over, but it doesn't seem to be the case.
There's no hangover.
Is the processing capacity of her liver exceptional?
Let alone hangover, she wasn't even drunk before she went to sleep.

However, Sherry went to sleep early last night.
The moment she hit the bed, she was asleep.
She probably didn't know that Roxanne was no longer on her period.

Afterward, we went to Quratar town labyrinth, as usual, for early morning exploration.
When we returned for breakfast, Sherry made a Misanga.

"Which skill do you get when you fuse Mermaid Monster Card?"

I ask Sherry at breakfast.

"Mermaid Monster Card adds water attribute to the equipment. When fused with a weapon, it attaches Tidal Sword skill. When fused with an armor, it attaches Water Shield."
"Water attribute? Does it require any specific type of weapon?"
"No, you can fuse it even with a spear or a wand."
"Even spear?"

How is it possible for a *spear* to have Tidal *Sword* skill?
And how am I supposed call it Tidal *Sword* when it's a *wand*?
"Weapon type skill, however, requires incantation, therefore, people fuse it mostly with armor."

Really? There's no incantation required to activate Water Shield?
Is it a passive skill?

"And what if you fuse it simultaneously with Kobold Monster Card?"
"A weapon receives Erosion Sword skill, while an armor receives Water Resistance. Erosion Sword is more powerful attack than Tidal Sword, while Water Resistance increases the resistance of Water Shield against water attribute magic. Umm… have you perhaps obtained a Mermaid Monster Card?"
"We received Luke's message yesterday."

I look toward Roxanne for confirmation.

"Yes, there was a successful bid of 2,500 Nar, it seems."
"Because Monster Card Fusion mostly fails, there's no need to use Kobold Monster Card with cheap equipment. If we get Water Shield, it'll be an effective counter against Needle Wood. Is it alright to fuse it with Hide Mittens instead of Leather Armor? I can try to fuse it with Leather Armor. If it fails, however, it'll turn back into raw materials. I'm not confident in my leather processing ability yet, but if it's Hide Mittens, I can remake them."

Sherry talks on and on.
She's desperate because she knows that she's the one who's supposed to do it.
About failing, however, there's no need to be worried.

"Let's fuse it with Hide Mittens then."
"I-I'll do my best."

Because the Leather Armor I'm currently wearing is the one I obtained from the wiped out party, and not the one I bought myself, it doesn't have any empty skill slot.
However, the Hide Mittens I'm wearing has an empty skill slot because I bought it from an armor shop.
I'm glad that I didn't sell it.

Because Needle Woods use water magic, Water Shield is effective against them.
It'll be useful on 8th floor of Quratar town labyrinth.
About other floors, I have no idea.

Does the effectiveness of equipment vary from floor to floor?
It would be difficult, if that were the case.

"If I have Water Shield on both the Leather Armor and Hide Mittens, will the effect be multiplied?"
"Since olden days, it has been a topic of discussion whether same effects from different equipment stack. Many believe that same effects don't stack. The great scholar of the past confirmed that stacking a number of effects which increase attack power doesn't multiply the attack power as many times. There are, however, people who believe that same effects do stack."

So there's no use in wielding two one-handed swords with '5x Increase in Attack' effect?
Well, 25x increase in attack power sounds frightening indeed.

After breakfast, we went to Merchant Guild.
I proceeded to the waiting room to the left from the entrance.
The staff member behind the counter called out to Armor Merchant Luke.

Roxanne and I sat on a chair.
Sherry was absorbed in reading her notebook.

While we were waiting, the color of the wall turned black, and someone came out.
Other customers.
Field Walk can be used through this wall, it seems.
Should I too use this wall from now on?

"Ah, I've been waiting for you. This way, please."

Comes Luke.
And guides us to the meeting room.

"I received your message yesterday that there was a successful bid for Mermaid Monster Card."

“Yes. Because there was no competition, the price ended up on lower side. It’s considerably lower than the market price. What do you think about it?”
“Sure, we will place the order.”
“Thank you. Here it is.”

Luke recites incantation for Item Box, and takes out the monster card.
He places the card on the table.

Mermaid Monster Card

There’s no doubt about it.
It’s indeed a Mermaid Monster Card.

“Indeed.”
“Err… Because you’re the successful bidder, you can use guild temple of Merchant Guild. Usage fee is 10 Nar. You can pay the fee after verification. Do you want to verify it?”

Because I received the monster card just like that, Luke asks puzzled.

“Verification?”
“Yes, whether the monster card is genuine or not.”

Ah, I see.
Because I can use Appraisal, I know that it’s a Mermaid Monster Card. Other people, however, have no such skill.
Let alone type of monster card, you can’t even tell if it’s a monster card. It looks just like any other card.
Therefore, they verify it.

I wonder if I should verify it too.
I want to see what kind of place is the guild temple.

I can use Appraisal.
And it’ll be troublesome to verify it every time.
But if it’s first time, I should verify it.
Anyone would verify it on their first time at the very least, as a precaution.

“No, It’s fine. I trust Luke. I don’t believe you would sell a fake to me on my first purchase.”

I say so to make him feel grateful.
It has more to do with business than being graceful.
I wonder if Luke will take the bait.

There's a good chance that Luke isn't an honest person.
There's a good chance that he's dishonest.
If that's the case, it'll be good for me to show him such a side.

Even if he's dishonest, he would be reluctant to sell fake items to me.
I can easily tell if an item is genuine or fake.
It's more of a test for him.
Also, if he comes to trust me, he may even show me the guild temple.

"Of course."

Says Luke, with an expressionless face.

"So the successful bid was 2,500 Nar?"
"Yes."
"If another cheap monster card appears, I'll buy it."
"Understood. Commission would be 500 Nar. You would have to pay in advance."
"…"

I wait, but nothing happens.
With 30% discount, 3,000 Nar should become 2,100 Nar. However, it doesn't seem to have activated.
Should I ask him for the total?

Luke will have to pass 2,500 Nar on to the original seller from the auction.
If he receives only 2,100 Nar from me, he'll be incurring loss.
I see, so this is why 30% discount isn't effective.

"I don't think it's a good idea to trust a broker too much."

Sherry advises me after we Warp to Vale town labyrinth through the wall inside the waiting room.
As I suspected, she doesn't have a good impression of brokers.
"It's only our first time. He won't try to sell fake items to me just yet. After buying 2 or 3 more from him, he may try to swindle me. At that time, I will

verify it. And just like that, we will receive considerable amount in the form of indemnity."

It's just a joke.

"How can your timing be so accurate?"
"While pushing fake items onto me, he'll be nervous. There'll be many signs for me to be able to identify."
"You can identify?"
"I believe I can."

No, it's just a joke.

"Brilliant! It was ignorant of me to question your insight. I'm really sorry."

She apologizes.
It was only a joke, Sherry.

"It's alright. I know you were advising me for my own good."
"Thank you."
"As expected of master."

It was only a joke, Roxanne.

"I saw the price of the successful bid on the bulletin in the waiting room. It was indeed 2,500 Nar. Previous successful bid of Mermaid Monster Card was 3,300 Nar. It was definitely cheaper than the previous one. I won't let a broker scam me so easily. I can tell when he's tricking me."

But it really was just a joke.

When we return from the labyrinth, I ask sherry to try fusion.
She sits on a chair by the table with the equipment and the card.

"Here, Hide Mittens and Mermaid Monster Card."
"I- yes… I'm sorry if it fails."

Sherry seems tensed.

“Don’t worry, relax. I won’t be angry, even if it fails.”
“Because master is saying so, it’ll be alright, Sherry.”

If you fail, however, there will be punishment on bed.
Likewise, there will be a reward on bed if you succeed.
What I mean to say is, there’s no problem.

Sherry makes up her mind. She activates the skill, and her hands start glowing.

Waterproof Hide Mittens | Arm Gear
Skill: Water Shield

“Oh, like I said, Sherry is amazing. Thank you.”
“I-I did it?”

It was a success.
What remains on Sherry’s hands is an equipment with a skill attached.

This makes it two consecutive successes.
The hypothesis of empty skill slot is undoubtedly correct.
A monster card will successfully fuse with the equipment, if there’s an empty skill slot.

After dinner, I ask Sherry to make a Misanga.

“Is it enough to make just one Misanga in the morning and in the evening?

I ask while receiving the Misanga.
This makes it seven Misanga in a row without an empty skill slot.
Well, it’s understandable if you take into account the ratio of equipment with empty skill slots in shops to those without one.
It’s not like Sherry’s success rate is low.

Well, it’s too soon to say whether it’s high or low.
But I can’t wait forever.
It would be too late, if we get Caterpillar Monster Card first.

Monster Card Fusion has succeeded twice in a row.
The hypothesis of empty skill slot holds correct.

Which means we have to make a Misanga with an empty skill slot before we get Caterpillar Monster Card.
We have to increase the number of Misanga.

“How many Misanga can a veteran Master Smith make at a time? Well, not exceedingly experienced Master Smiths, but how about those who have around six months to a year of experience. I don’t want to ask you to do something unreasonable.”
“Do you know if they can make more than one?”
“Well, if they’re experienced, they can.”

You know it when your remaining MP is critically low.
Sherry is currently Master Smith Lv14.
Her MP should be a lot more than a Master Smith Lv1.

She makes one Misanga in the morning and in the evening, but this time she also used Monster Card Fusion in the afternoon.
Last time, when she used Monster Card Fusion, she was in a critical situation. But it wasn’t the case this time.

“And what about you, Sherry?”
“Umm… one Misanga in the morning and in the evening is the limit for a six months old Master Smith. I can try to make more than one, but generally speaking, one is the limit.”

Sherry looks troubled.
Unless you train for at least six months, you won’t have confidence in your ability.
Especially if you’re a thinking type, like Sherry.

“It’s alright, I believe you can. Why don’t you try one more?”

I put the Misanga in my Item Box, and take a thread out.
I pass it on to Sherry.

“Umm… okay, I understand.”

Sherry is hesitant about it, but nods immediately.
She holds the thread in her hands, and activates the skill.
Her hands start glowing.

Misanga | Accessory
Skill: Empty

“Oh, you did it.”

She did it.
The Misanga she just made has an empty skill slot.

“I really did it! Thank you.”

No, I didn’t mean that.
I mean you finally made one with an empty skill slot.
Great!

“You really did it.”
“Umm… I knew I could do it, but I was told that I need at least six months of training first.”

I see.

“I don’t think you should make too many too soon. You made two just now, and you also used Monster Card Fusion earlier in the day.”
“Now that I think about it, you were able to use Monster Card Fusion right after becoming a Master Smith. Is there no such training required for Monster Card Fusion?”

Sherry looks puzzled.
Spot on.

“W-Well, you were able to do it successfully, so there’s no need for training, I guess.”
“Why would they lie to me? Why would they say that I can’t make more than one for at least 6 months?”
“They didn’t know how amazing Sherry is.”

The person who taught Sherry — I’m sorry.
You were not at fault. No one can normally reach Lv14 in six months.

“No, I’m not that good.”
“Sherry is amazing, and this is a perfect Misanga.”

I point to the Misanga.

“Eh? What do you mean?”
“I want you to know something, Sherry. I can tell if a monster card can be successfully fused with an equipment.”
“Eh? Really?”
“You can trust me.”

If she continues to fuse monster cards, she would eventually find it out anyway.

“But how?”
“I can’t tell you how, but earlier, I was sure you would succeed, when I asked you to fuse that monster card with those mittens.”
“Is that so?”
“A Master Smith is considered successful when they can make Sacrificial Misanga from a Misanga on their first attempt, right? I look forward to you fusing Caterpillar Monster Card with this Misanga.”

I nod reassuringly toward perplexed Sherry.

Chapter 64 - Abstinance attack

After thinking about it, I decided to do some testing on the Sex Maniac's skills.
First of all I'll do my best to waste some energy, to test out the [Increased Vigor] skill. TN: Can also be translated as [Increased Energy].
I tried it once with Roxanne, and once with Sherry, without the Sex Maniac job.
Then I used the Sex Maniac job and tried it continuously.

The result:
Both were delicious.

It's no use.
No. Because I'm still going strong in the fourth round, it's certain that my energy is increased.

The difference in time between using it, and not using it, I'm not sure about.
It's hard to understand exactly the effects of [Increased Vigor].
I can still continue, and I'm not sure of the limit.

Should I consider this a failed experiment?
Is it just because it's the first day of testing?

If I think about it, I hadn't been to the limit before using Sex Maniac.
To confirm the effects, I should probably challenge the limit both with and without Sex Maniac.
Though, I might break if I test the limit.

Roxanne and Sherry didn't chat after I went to sleep.
I seem to have tired them as well.
Thinking about it, it might be bad to test the limits of [Increased Vigor].

In the morning I wake up, clinging to Roxanne like usual.
Even though I slept with Sex Maniac active, it seems I didn't waste any shots.

I lean over Roxanne with ease.
I pin down her beautiful body.
A soft body which is an object of desire.

…
Maybe I shouldn't?
Or should I?
I regain some reason, and stop for now.

I need to test the [Abstinence Attack].
I don't think it's possible for me to be abstinent for two or three days, let alone ten.
How about half a day?
Maybe a day?

It's possible for me to endure it until the evening, so that's abstinence of about 20 hours.
Will there be a difference in power after 20 hours? I'll have to try it out.
At worst I at least want to try it after having practiced abstinence until morning.
I can't explode by accident now.

I get off of Roxanne's soft tender body.
I turn away, while holding Roxanne.
I don't want to let her go.

From the side, I kissed Roxanne's mouth.
My lips stick to her mouth.

I stick to her with all my desire.
I stick to her with the limit of my power.
Like our very first kiss, I stick to her.
Tongues entering, twirling around each other, a warm delicacy to be desired.

"Mmm…. Mmmmmm"

Hearing Roxanne moan is the highest reward.
I embrace her powerfully.
I feel her smooth fair skin, and enjoy her elasticity.
Rich rubber balls push into my chest from Roxanne's.

It's good that I could meet these rubber balls.
A part of me gets hot because of these rubber balls.

Hot, hot.

No, I shouldn't.
I really shouldn't.
I gather my resolve, and give up.

The verification of the skill.
I need to practice abstinence for now.

However, though I barely managed to give up, we are still kissing.
Roxanne's tongue moves, and gives me a smooth feeling.
It's a gentle, flexible, and melting taste.
Ah, at the rate things are going, my resolve will disappear.

"Good morning."
"…Good morning, Master."

I managed to withdraw.
My reasoning is stretched to the limits.
An Orichalcum level reasoning is needed to separate from Roxanne.
The pressure of the rich elasticity against my chests goes away.

As I take a breather, a hand from behind me moves at my neck.
Ah, there's still Sherry.
Gah, my reasoning is paper thin now.

"Good morning."
"Oh, good morning."

As expected of Orichalcum, I manage to get through.
I part with Sherry, and leave her gasping for breath.
Why is she gasping for breath?
Did she inhale to strongly?

"I was bad last night. I lost my self control and let loose."
"No. Ah. I was happy with it."
"I was as well."

Since they said they were happy with it, I almost jumped at them.
My reasoning manages to win and I hold myself back.

I demonstrate my willpower, and get up.
I demonstrate my willpower, and get dressed.
I demonstrate my willpower, and equip myself with leather shoes & leather armor.
I must keep a strong mind.

We went to Quratar's Labyrinth, and I passed out protective gear from my item box.

"Sherry, you can wear the waterproof leather mittens you made yesterday."
"Is that alright?"
"The Needle Woods at the moment are using magic. I can withstand one or two hits without trouble. Roxanne has a good chance of evading. For now it's most beneficial if you wear them Sherry."
"Thank you."

However, I'm not using alchemist, so we don't have [Plating].
That will change things to a degree.
It shouldn't be a problem though.

Kaga Michio|Male|17 years old.
Explorer Lv34|Hero Lv31|Wizard Lv33|Monk Lv32|Sex Maniac Lv2
Equipment: Wand|Leather Shoes|Leather Gloves|Leather Hat|Leather Armor|Misanga

Roxanne|Female|16 years old.
Beast Warrior Lv21
Equipment|Scimitar|Leather Shoes|Leather Gloves|Leather Hat|Leather Jacket|Wooden Shield

Sherry|Female|16 years old.
Master Smith Lv14
Equipment:Club|Waterproof Leather Mittens|Leather Hat|Leather Jacket|Leather Shoes

We move through the Labyrinth with Roxanne's guidance.
The Labyrinth is a battlefield.
You can't relax.
Roxanne's cute butt moves on ahead.

It's a full view of her butt from behind.
Her tail swings with every step.
No, I can't.
This is the Labyrinth.

I need to stay on my guard in the Labyrinth.
If I relax my guard I might miss something crucial.
Sherry's face is beautiful as well.
I want to turn and taste it.

You never know what's going to happen in the Labyrinth.
It's important to pay attention.
If I look carefully, I can see Roxanne's chest bouncing in her leather jacket.
This is awesome.

This is a battlefield.
This isn't the time to be relaxed.
I want to finish early and return home.
I'll return to the bed.

No.
This is the Labyrinth.
This is a battlefield.

"It's coming."

Roxanne reports.
Roxanne's voice is also lovely.
Her voice in bed is lovely too.

I want to hear it again soon.
I want to hear it right now.
I want to hear it over and over.

Yes.
The nuisance must die.
I reduce it to ashes with five spells.

"Yes."

I receive a branch from Sherry.
Sherry picking things up is lovely.
If this wasn't the Labyrinth, I'd throw her down right now.

Yes. This is the Labyrinth.
I can't relax.
I focus my mind to check my surroundings again.
Ah, Roxanne's chest is bouncing again.

You can feel a bit of tension in the Labyrinth.
It's the spirit of being on a battlefield.
I'm determined to battle Roxanne and Sherry in bed.

No. This is a battlefield.
There is no room for the erotic thoughts a high school boy has during class.

Ah, this evening.
Let's get the bath ready today.
I can endure it until I get into the bath.
I'll do this to Roxanne, and that to Sherry.

Hurry up. I don't know if I'll make it.
It's a long time until evening.
It's too long.
This is a true hell.
TN: Sneaky scene change, GO!

"Phew!"

I've poured the hot water from the jar into the bath and let out a sigh.
I'm tired.
It feels like my MP has decreased.
Since I made a lot of hot water, I should probably go to the Labyrinth again.

Is this abstinence long enough?
The next trip to the Labyrinth will probably be the last one for today.
Therefore, I'll need to use the [Abstinence Attack].
I can't build up my sexual desire any more.

My mind has gone crazy all day as I moved around the Labyrinth, and the abstinence caused an unreasonable amount of pain.
Even if Sex Maniac has [Increased Vigor/Energy], it doesn't seem that useful.
The strain on the battlefield is bad.

I wasn't confused by my sexual desire as I used Sex Maniac in the Labyrinth.
I mostly acted as normal.
But the stray thoughts going through my mind…
Well, that's not anything new.

"Are you going to the Labyrinth?"

As I leave the bathroom, and descend to the first floor, Roxanne calls to me from the kitchen.
Cute.
I want to throw her down.
I have to endure it, I've come this far.

"Who wants to come?"
"I need to watch the fire."

Sherry watches the cooking, and I leave for Vale Labyrinth's eighth floor.
Roxanne is with me to guide me.

"Here."

Three Collagen Coral, and an Escape Goat.
Perfect.
Durandal is hungry for blood tonight.

"Roxanne, handle the two Collagen Coral on the right, I'll handle the Escape Goat."

I raise Durandal, and rush in.
I aim at the Escape Goat.

Usually Escape Goat Lv8 starts to run away after a single strike from Durandal.

In other words, if this blow is weaker than normal, it won't run away.
I can see the power of the [Abstinence Attack] after enduring it to my limit.

The demon gives me a suitable chance.
I used [Abstinence Attack], and swing Durandal down on it.
A strong slash slams into the Escape Goat.

It's a powerful swing.
It feels different to the first time I tried [Abstinence Attack].

Durandal cuts through, the demon falls.
A single blow.

The remaining demon launches a counter attack.
The Collagen Coral hurls itself at me.
Roxanne is dodging attacks from both sides.

I use Durandal to block the [Body Slam].
In return, I slash at the Collagen Coral.

The demon's attacks don't stop.
Roxanne evades a [Body Slam], and slashes with her scimitar.
I manage to avoid a frontal attack from the Collagen Coral somehow.

One of the ones fighting Roxanne springs at me.
I saw it coming, but it's not possible to avoid.
I staggered as I received the blow.

I return the favor with Durandal.
The second demon falls down.

I turn to the side, and face another Collagen Coral.
I exchange blows with it.
It stagger's and I attack it again.
Another blow is dealt, and the demon is killed.

Roxanne is fighting the last one.
Roxanne dodges a [Body Slam], and attacks with her scimitar again.
I swing at the side of the Collagen Coral.

The demon springs at Roxanne again.
Roxanne avoids it using her wooden shield.
I swing Durandal at it as it lands.
The Collagen Coral falls, and becomes smoke.

“Thank you for your hard work.”
“I’m tired. Roxanne, you didn’t get hit?”
“Right, there was no problem.”

Is the position and timing of the Collagen Coral’s attacks that easy to understand?
I get hit by several.
I shouldn’t keep count.

However, I recovered from all my wounds because of Durandal’s HP absorption.
It might be possible for me to solo the eight floor.

The problem is the pain from the attacks.
I don’t like pain.
I want to avoid it if possible.

“Shall we go back?”

It’s probably that time.
We returned to the house with [Warp].

I’m feeling calm after using the [Abstinence Attack.]

The impulses running rampant earlier are gone.
It’s a feeling of refreshment.

The haze in my mind from a little while ago is gone.
My mind and soul feel so peaceful.
So calm.
I might be at the stage of an invincible mind when it comes to sexual desire.

I can become a Shrine Maiden now.
Well, because I’m a man, it’s something else?

I wonder about it, so I checked to see if it's there.
Of course, it wasn't there.

Eating dinner, and then having a bath, I'm relatively calm.
I'm calm even though I washed every corner of Roxanne's body.
I stretched my desires today like a rubber band, but now I'm calm.
Even though I washed Sherry's body, right down to the last detail, I'm calm.

I embrace it as I soak in the hot water.
I am completely calm.
I embrace them, and do some cuddling & kissing, but I am quite calm.

We did it twice before going to the bed, but you could say I am quite calm.
We did it the same number of times in bed, as we did with Sex Maniac the previous night.
It could be said that I am quite calm.

Is this what is called the [Abstinence Attack]?
I'll have to confirm how much power it has.
I would be great if I practiced abstinence for ten days.
I could probably one shot a boss on the eighth floor with Durandal.

But, ten days is tough.
Two days isn't easy.
Probably, I can't do more than a night.
It's because I sleep with Roxanne and Sherry.

Chapter 65 - Poison Sting

We cleared 8th floor, and moved on to 9th.
We defeated the boss of 8th floor of Vale's labyrinth without any trouble.
With Plating to our defence, and Durandal's attack, it was an easy victory.

The monster native to 9th floor of Vale's labyrinth seems to be Slow Rabbit.
Sherry acquired the information from Quratar's Explorer Guild.
We have already fought against Slow Rabbits on 8th floor of Quratar's labyrinth. As its name suggests, its movement speed is slow.
There'll be no problem on this floor.
It'll be a walk in the park.

"It took quite some time."

After taking out a Slow Rabbit Lv9 with sixth Fireball, I mutter.
Six huh?
Six magic attacks seem to be required to take out a Lv9 monster.
The higher we move up the labyrinth, the stronger the monsters become.

"The number of magic attacks required has increased by one, but it doesn't make much of a difference. As expected of master. You can take out monsters in a few magic attacks."
"That said, the time required to kill them has increased as well."
"It's not a problem, as long as you avoid their attacks."

As the number of magic attacks required to take out a monster increases, so does the time required.
The longer the battle lasts, the more the opportunities to close in.
And the more you receive their attacks.
Except for a certain someone.

There's no problem for me, however, as I have Durandal.
Even if I receive their attacks, I can recover my HP right after.
The problem is for Sherry.

"9th floor is difficult, isn't it?"

After fighting for a while, I ask Sherry.
Sherry received attacks from monsters over the course.
Getting hit is unavoidable.

“No, not at all. It isn’t much different from 8th floor in difficulty level.
“Has the number attacks from monsters not increased?”
“Yes, but you immediately cast Healing, so there’s no problem. Ah, is it troubling you? From now on, I’ll try my best to dodge their attacks like Roxanne-san.”
“No, not at all. It’s not troubling me. If Sherry has no problem with it, I don’t have any problem either.”

I deny it in a hurry.
Sherry seems to have become more focused.
I’m fine with it, as long as Sherry is fine.
We will manage 9th floor somehow.

Next morning. We move to 9th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth as well.
As always, we defeated the boss of 8th floor thanks to Durandal.

“The monster native to 9th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth is NT Ant. NT Ants use poison type attacks. Their weakness is water type attacks.”

Sherry briefs while we transfer to 9th floor from the boss room on 8th floor.
“Poison?”
9th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth seems difficult to deal with.

“Thank you. So I better use water type magic attacks?”
“Yes.”
“Got it. Are there other monsters that use poison type attacks?”
“Umm… SPI Spider. The chance of getting poisoned, however, is low. White Caterpillar, that is boss type Green Caterpillar, has a poison type skill attack, but it uses the skill only when the target is tied with thread. It’s a strong combination attack, from what I’ve heard.”

Ah, I see.
Well, I was suggested earlier to keep Antidote Pills at all times.
There seem to be many monsters that use poison type attacks.
I was lucky so far to have not met one.

About SPI Spider, we have Roxanne to confront it.
We don't have to be worried about its attacks.
Whereas I can interrupt White Caterpillar's skill.

"I didn't know that."
"On lower floors, NT Ant is the only monster that uses poison type attacks. The scary thing about NT Ant is, aside from its skill attack which is guaranteed to poison the target, its normal attack as well has a chance to poison the target."

Two poison type attacks?

The higher you move up the labyrinth, the more the monsters use skill attacks.

"What happens when you get poisoned?"
"You lose HP over time, and if left as is, you eventually die."
"And you have to use Antidote Pill to cure it?"
"Yes."
"Is there any aftereffect?"
"Poison itself can be cured by Antidote Pill. However, to recover the HP you've lost due to poisoned state, you'll have to use Recovery Pill."

There doesn't seem to be any major aftereffect.

"Got it. I have Antidote Pills in my Item Box. Tell me as soon as you get poisoned."
"Okay, master."
"Understood."

It'll be faster to take it out if it's in backpack than in Item Box.
Sherry has Item Box, but it needs incantation.
I, however, don't need any incantation.

But I have to take into account the situation where I'm stuck, and unable to move.
That said, as long as it's not boss battle, there's no need to be worried.

"Sherry, I'll give you some Antidote Pills for emergency situations."

I take Antidote Pills out from my Item Box, and hand over to Sherry.
Being an Explorer Lv10, the capacity of her Item Box is 10×10.
Then I'll give her ten Antidote Pills.

With Roxanne's help, we find an NT Ant.
It's a huge ant.
It's appearance is that of an ordinary ant.

But it's huge.
Oddly huge.
Even from distance, it looks huge.

It looks gross.
No, rather creepy than gross.

Uu…
It would've been worse, if it were a huge rhinoceros beetle instead.
But it's not a huge rhinoceros beetle, it's a huge ant.

It doesn't have that black lustre. It reminds me of a G. (TL: G is a slang for Gokiburi, that is Cockroach. Thanks to our fellow readers, Navi Nay, icemiced and radical dreamer.)
Uwa-
I remember it.
It has same jagged legs.

No.
It's an ant.
It's only an ant.
It's not a G.

I call for Waterball in my mind.
A sphere of water forms over my head, and is shot inside the cave.
Like a G, the NT Ant moves quickly, but there's not enough time for it to jump out of the way.
The Waterball hits it, and bursts.

That's a relief.
It's not a G after all.
If it were, it would've evaded it.

I launch two more Waterballs.
Its movement speed is not much different from other monsters.
It's an ant after all.

But it's not a worker ant, it's NT Ant.
If it were working, we would have lost. (TL: There's a pun here, for those who didn't notice.)

Now that I take a closer look, it's about one meter long.
So huge, and looks creepy too.

The Waterball hits, and the NT Ant collapses.
It took three magic attacks.
It's not a worker ant.
If it were working, it wouldn't have died.

Three huh?
Because water is its weakness, it took fewer attacks.
Lv9 monsters normally require six magic attacks.
Because it takes only three attacks, I was able to take it out before it could close in.

Poison Sting

When the green smoke dissipated, a terrifying item remained.
Terrifying.
Sherry goes, and picks it up with ease.
Is it okay to do that?

"Done."
"Err… is it okay to touch it like that?"
"Unless eaten, it's not poisonous."

It seems safe to touch it.
I receive it cautiously.
It's a black, 5 cm long, slender cone.
Because it's Poison Sting, I was of the idea that its tip would be poisonous, but it doesn't seem to be the case.

“So it’s harmful to eat it, unlike snake?”
“Is that right?”
“That’s right.”

Because snake poison is made of protein, it’s safe to ingest it, or so I’ve heard.
A snake hunts its prey using poison.
However, after it kills its prey, it eats that same poisoned prey.
Its poison harms only if you get bitten.

“Is that so? That’s good to know.”
“As expected of master.”

It’s useless to gain respect with the help of modern world knowledge.
I have already lost respect by not knowing about the sting.
Both offset each other.
Sherry didn’t show it through her eyes or words, but she’ll definitely think bad of someone who’s from countryside yet doesn’t know about Poison Sting.

Are snakes of this world different from those of earth?
If the snakes of this world hunt their prey after poisoning it, then they’re same as snakes of earth, and it should be safe to eat them.
Predator snakes don’t defend themselves with poison.

“Poison Sting can be used against monsters. If you shoot Poison Sting at them, and it hits, they get poisoned. This strategy is perfect for boss battles. To attack with Poison Sting at the very beginning of the battle.”
“Can boss be poisoned?”
“If all six members of the party shoot two to three stings.”
“Is the chance low?”

Two to three stings from a party of six makes it twelve to eighteen stings.
To inflict poison, you need to shoot a number of stings, it seems.
Which means it’s highly unlikely to inflict poison with just one or two stings.

“There’s another use of these stings. There are many monsters that escape from labyrinth to outside. These monsters, however, don’t attack people unless they’re attacked. Poison Sting isn’t registered as attack by a monster unless it inflicts poison to the monster, as it has no other effect. However,

it's already late for the monster by the time it registers the attack, for it's already poisoned. In poisoned state, it's easier to take it out."

Is there such a trick?
So it's useful in more ways than one.

"Oh, I used to play that, when I was a kid."

Roxanne says in excited voice.
Roxanne seems to have done it already.

"You did, Roxanne?"
"Eh? But it costs a lot. Only nobles can afford it, or so I've heard."

I see.
Sting is not a free item.
Even Kobold salt isn't free. Poison Sting has to be decently priced.
It's regrettable that you have to use many on just one monster.

"In the vicinity of where I lived, NT Ants used to appear. So we used to hunt them, and collect Poison Stings. Because our elders used to get angry, if we carried the stings home, we used to kill other monsters in the forest with those stings."

This makes sense.
Sounds safe too.

"So you used to hunt NT Ants?
"Yes."
"But we used to get scolded if we were found out."
"Because we were only kids, and not strong enough, it used to take us few hours."

I heard something absurd just now, or did I mishear it?
Are few hours on this world equivalent to few seconds on earth?

"Eh? But NT Ants have poison type skill attack. Wasn't it dangerous?"
"There's no problem, if you dodge their attacks."
"And you used to fight for hours?"
"Yes."

It's Sherry doing the questioning. It's not my area of expertise.

"And then you used the Poison Stings on other monsters?"
"Yes."
"Can't you hunt monsters normally?"
"The monsters were a lot stronger than me. Even if I attacked, they wouldn't budge in the slightest. The place where I used to live was surrounded by Non-Rem Golems." (TL: I've changed the monster's name from LEM Golem to REM Golem. Thanks to Rain, our fellow reader, for the reference.)

So they used to collect Poison Stings by hunting NT Ants, and then used the stings on Non-Rem Golems, which can't normally be killed by kids.
Sounds sensible.

"Did you know that Non-Rem Golems are exception, that they actively attack people even outside of labyrinth?"
"Yes, I knew that."
"If you knew that, don't you think it was dangerous?"
"A monster will register the attack anyway, if I inflict poison to it, so there's not much of a difference."

No! it's different. It's totally different.
Poisoning an inactive monster is different from poisoning an active monster. The difficulty level is miles apart.

"If the area was surrounded by Non-Rem Golems, how did you find NT Ants?
"I could locate them from their smell, so there was no place for them to hide."
"Although the approach seems good, it's not as easy to poison monsters as it sounds."
"You can inflict poison if you shoot twenty stings."

Sherry keeps questioning, and Roxanne keeps answering with straight face.

"What if you get found out first, before you shoot twenty stings?"
"If I were to get found out, I would simply shoot the stings while dodging its attacks."
"E-Even if the monster gets poisoned, what after that?
"I continue to dodge its attacks until it collapses."
"O-Only dodge?"

“My attacks were completely ineffective. Not only that, if I had received even one of their attacks, I would’ve been dead. Those who were not strong enough, died even from a light graze of their attacks. I had no option but to dodge. It’s safe, however, for they eventually died thanks to Poison Stings I received from NT Ants.”

It’s safe? You’re not serious, right?
Roxanne, it’s not a play.

So is this the secret of Roxanne’s insane ability?
She used to play with monsters ever since she was a kid.

No, she could play like that because she could dodge.
Did she improve her ability to dodge by playing with monsters, or was she able to play with monsters because she was able to dodge?
It’s same as asking whether the chicken came first or the egg.

In any case, Roxanne wasn’t high level when I met her.
Are monsters outside of labyrinth Lv1, so the experience you get from killing them is less?
Or do you not get the experience if the monster dies due to poison?

There is something else I have to confirm.

“Other kids used to play too?”
“I used to call other kids to play, but I was scolded, and was banned from playing with others.”

Was it not so because it was impossible for others?
I’m glad.
Most probably, there was no other kid on the level of Roxanne.

Sherry’s shoulders are trembling.
Her eyes have become moist.
Uh-huh
I understand how you feel.

I put my hands on Sherry’s trembling shoulders.
I have to say it before it’s late.

“Give it up.”

Was it kind of me to say that? I wonder.

Chapter 66 - Order

After taking out an NT Ant with three Waterstorms, it takes four Fireballs to take out a Needle Wood Lv9.
If I were to use only fire type magic, it would take six attacks. Which means three water type magic attacks are equivalent to two fire type magic attacks.
Lv8 monsters require five magic attacks, in which case, three water type magic attacks are equivalent to roughly around one fire type magic attack and a half.
Water type magic does half as much damage?

NT Ant is the monster native to 9th floor of Quratar's labyrinth. However, Needle Woods from 8th floor also appear here alongside NT Ants.
Water type magic is the weakness of NT Ants, but Needle Woods have resistance toward water type magic.
It's surely not an ideal pair of monsters.

Still, I'm glad that it's NT Ant that appears most of the time on 9th floor.
I'm glad that it's not the other way round.
If three Needle Woods and an NT Ant were to appear, it would take three Waterstorms to kill just that one NT Ant. Three Needle Woods would still be standing.
It's a relief that it's NT Ant that appears most of the time on 9th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

NT Ant has to be taken out before it uses poison type attack.
Since it takes only three water type magic attacks, it can be taken out before it uses poison type attack.
As it stands, NT Ants won't get any chance to use poison type attacks.

The level of Needle Woods has increased, so should the time and the number of magic attacks required to take them out. It's not the case overall, however, for the number of Needle Woods has decreased compared to 8th floor.
We are managing 9th floor of Quratar's labyrinth without any trouble.

We return from the labyrinth for breakfast.
Today's breakfast is macaroni yakisoba.
Rabbit meat and vegetables are first fried in olive oil. Boiled macaroni and

some wine are then added to it. After it's baked, I season it with fish sauce.
I had already tried it earlier at dinner, and had confirmed that there was no issue with its taste.
There doesn't seem to be a fork in this world.
Roxanne and Sherry use wooden knife and spoon skillfully.
Because I have made chopsticks for myself, I wonder how Roxanne and Sherry are going to fare with yakisoba.

By the way, there's a long spaghetti-like pasta in this world.
I was wondering how people here eat it without fork. Apparently, they grab it with bare hands.

To the extent of meat and vegetables, knife and spoon are enough.
But to eat yakisoba with bare hands? I won't ever let Roxanne and Sherry do that.
Therefore, I used macaroni.
Because it's short, spoon would do.

While I was preparing breakfast, Roxanne was doing the laundry, and Sherry was doing the cleaning.
Because there's no washing machine or vacuum cleaner in this world, it's quite taxing.
It'll be burdensome for them, if I don't prepare breakfast myself.

I put the macaroni yakisoba on the dining table.
Sweet-salty aroma of fish sauce is stimulating appetite.
Those two are already here.

"Did I make you wait for long?"
"Not at all."

Sherry sits down on her chair, and Roxanne brushes her hair from behind her.
It's the same brush she bought on her day off.
I feel like something is missing.
Roxanne puts the brush away, and sits right across from me.

"Thank you, Roxanne-san."
"Let's start eating then?"
"Yes. Thanks for the food."

Setting that feeling aside, I serve the baked macaroni to the those two.

About the macaroni yakisoba, the taste was good enough. Still, something was missing.
Because it's macaroni, and not noodles?
Or because there's no aonori?
I get it. It's because I couldn't find aonori and beni shoga.
Oh well, it can't be helped.
Roxanne and Sherry look so cute with their cheeks stuffed.
The yakisoba is not up to the standards, but it's still satisfactory.

About the feeling I was having earlier that something was missing.
It's mirror.
Roxanne and Sherry need a mirror.
I dont need any mirror myself, but it seems to be necessary now.

About a month has passed ever since I came to this world.
My hair has grown quite a bit, and it's getting annoying.
I'll ask Roxanne to cut my hair sometime.
It'll be better to get a mirror before that.

"Do we need a mirror?"

I ask while putting a spoonful of macaroni in my mouth.

"It'll be better to have one, but not needed."
"I wish there was one that could reflect exact image."

In this world, polished metal serves as mirror.
It doesn't reflect clearly.
I saw one in a store. Although it was high quality one, it wasn't that good.

"There is one that reflects exact image. Do you perhaps not know about Palmasque mirror?"
"Palmasque?"
"Palmasque is a town that's situated between the Empire and Kassim. Roxanne-san's native place is a little off from Kassim."

Hmm…
I remember having a conversation with Roxanne in that regard.

I don't remember the details, but I know there was such a conversation.
If she came from Kassim, it's not surprising that she knows about Palmasque.

"I-I'm from a place far away from Kassim, that's why I don't know about Kassim."

I try to deceive them.
I wonder if it was enough.
There's a possibility of getting cornered if I keep on making random stuff up.

"Is that so? Palmasque is a city famous for its glassworks. The mirror they make using glass reflects exact image. It's a luxury item, however, and is often exchanged as gifts among nobles."

There seem to be mirrors made from glass in this world.
There are some advanced manufacturing techniques here after all.
I wonder if I can find one in the Imperial Capital.

"It seems to be expensive. Let's look for one someday."
"If you buy it directly from Palmasque, it won't be that expensive."
"If it's master, can't he go there himself?"

Roxanne points it out.
If I can go there myself, I can buy it directly from there.
If I buy it from there, it'll be relatively cheaper.

"Palmasque is quit far, you can't go there directly. This is the reason why it's expensive here."
"I see."

If adventurers could go there directly using Field Walk, its price wouldn't be so high.
Large objects aside, you can carry hand-size mirrors with you in field walk.
If you could get it directly from palmasqu at cheaper price, and resell it elsewhere for higher, it would be easy money.

But Palmasque is quite far, so much that you can't go there directly. For this reason, Palmasque mirror is costly here.
The distance seems to be too much for even Field Walk.

"Can master not go there?"

To Roxanne, I'm someone great, but I'm actually not.
To them, I'm from a place that's far from even Kassim, while Palmasque is closer than Kassim from here.
By that logic, I should be able to go to Palmasque.
It'll be strange if I can't.

I really shouldn't make random stuff up.

"I-I guess."
"We can cover the distance in several smaller trips. It's not necessary to go there directly."

Sherry advises to cover the distance in parts.
It's not a given that I came here from beyond Kassim in one day.
If it's on the same continent, I could come here even on foot.
If I traveled for many years.

"Well, it's worth trying."
"A little farther from the Imperial Capital is a town called Dohona. Do you know about it?"
"No, I don't."
"After Dohona is Dobur, after Dobur is Saboja, after which is Aiena, after Aiena is…"

Sherry cites several towns.
Which I haven't heard about, of course.
But it'll be strange for someone, who came from beyond Kassim, to not know that.

That's bad.
Well then, Let's just say I came here from Kassim directly.
I didn't come here passing through all those towns.

“I don’t know any of these.”
“Is that so? You must’ve taken a different route.”

Of course, another route!
There has to be another route.

“That’s right.”
“I won’t recommend going to Palmasque’s Adventurer Guild directly. We should go there via. adventurer guilds of the connecting cities I just mentioned.”

It has been decided that we’ll go there by making several smaller trips.

After breakfast, Sherry makes a Misanga.
The number of misanga she makes is increasing gradually.

Misanga | Accessory
Skill: Empty

By now, she has made a total of three Misanga with empty skill slot.

I wonder if it’s enough for the time being.
We can make three Sacrificial Misanga now.
If it breaks, however, we’ll need more.

“What’s the next equipment that Master Smiths are supposed to make after Misanga?”
“Once you’ve trained yourself in making Misanga, you try to make Dagger next.”
“Dagger?”

It’s Dagger. And here I was hoping that she would make a sword next.

“Umm… Misanga training requires a minimum of six months to a year, but it can go up to two years depending on the person.”
“If they can’t make more than one Misanga in the morning and in the evening during the training?”
“Y-Yes.”
“But Sherry can make more than one. Shouldn’t you move on to next

equipment?"
"Y-Yes, I guess."

She hasn't completely let go of what was taught to her, it seems.

"It's alright. Even if you can't, it's fine."
"We use a branch when making Dagger. However, the branch is lost, if it results in failure."

I see.
There seems to be a cost of failure.

"Is there anything else, in case of failure?"
"No, there's nothing else."
"If it's only a loss of branch, then there's no problem."
"I-I understand. To make a Dagger, we need two Jack-knives, dropped by Kobolds, a branch and a piece of hide."

It's complicated.
Is it gonna be alright?
Yeah, it's alright.
I said it's alright, but…

"But isn't it a sudden increase in difficulty level?"
"Using multiple materials is not difficult. There are many equipment that require a lot more raw materials."
"I see. Two Jack-knives, a branch and a piece of hide?"

Jack knives seem to be used as material.
Can they be evolved into a Dagger?
Not unless you're a Master Smith, I guess.

Jack-knife can be turned back into metal to make copper coins. Is that why branch is used?
Branch is necessary in processing metal.

What about hide then?

"Hide is used to make sheath."
"That's convenient."

When an equipment is made, its sheath is made together with it.
It would indeed be bothersome if you were to first make the equipment and its sheath separately.
But that's not the case.

For afternoon exploration, we go to 3rd floor to hunt Kobolds.
The problem is, Kobolds don't drop only Jack-knives.
I hunted about ten Kobolds.
Last two Kobolds both drop Jack-knives. Finally!

Can't I buy it from the guild?
No, Dagger is not an essential item.
We need to make a Dagger only because it's the next equipment in order.

I have no idea why Master Smiths have predetermined order of equipment.
Due to MP capacity, perhaps?
Or to gain experience?
Whatever the reason is, we need to follow it.

"Well, I'll start then."

Before dinner, I hand two Jack-knives, a branch and a piece of hide to Sherry.
Sherry activates the skill.
Her hands start glowing.

Her hands keep glowing.
I don't know why it's taking too long this time.
She picks the materials up from the table one after the other.
It's clear that the difficulty level has increased.

Dagger | One-handed sword

When the light subsided, only a sword remained.
And it's sheathed.

"Oh, a success."
"I did it!"

Sherry seems to be fine too.

“Are you feeling okay?”
“Yes, I’m fine. I feel I can make one more.”
“No, there’s no need to overdo it. It should be more taxing than Misanga.”
“That’s right. Making a Dagger requires more effort than making a Misanga. But I don’t feel tired at all. I think I can make more. And I was told that it’s more tiring to make a Dagger than to make a Misanga. They told me to make one Misanga in the morning and in the evening for a long period of time. Why did they lie to me?”

Sherry’s distrust toward people who taught her seems to be increasing.
It’s getting bad.

Her MP is a lot more than other Master Smiths of same age as her, due to her high level, and shared effects of my Hero job.
There’s no helping that she’s different from the rest.

“I think it varies from person to person. They were not wrong in my opinion. It’s just that Sherry is an extraordinary Master Smith.”
“Thank you. That might be so. Dagger sells for high price, yet there was no one who mass produced Dagger. Dagger might indeed be tiring to make, so it was probably not a lie. It’s a mystery to me.”
“Dagger’s price is high? Then can you make more Daggers from now on?”

I change the subject.
It’s too good to be true in this world, so it’s better to not dwell further into it.

“Yes. I’ll do my best.”
“So, after Dagger are hide equipment?”
“Hide Mittens, Hide Cap, Hide Boots, any equipment that requires one piece of hide.”

I see.
So the difficulty level doesn’t increase if it requires only one piece of hide?

“There’s plenty of hide here. Can you make one?”
“Yes. It should be fine even if it results in failure, since it doesn’t need branch.”

Because there’s no cost of failure this time, Sherry replies with a voice full of energy.

Chapter 67 - Rational

Next morning. I go to Vale's Adventurer Guild.
Roxanne is doing the laundry, and Sherry is preparing breakfast.

Quratar will be farther away from Palmasque, as it's to the west of the Imperial Capital, which in turn is to the west of Vale.
So it's rational to start off from Vale.
It's also well in the morning here than in the west.
I had Sherry write the names of the towns that fall on route from the Imperial Capital to Palmasque. I match it with the ads posted on the guild wall.

There are many adventurers who are stationed here for the purpose of teleporting to other locations.
Charges are two silver coins per person.
Therefore, I have Roxanne and Sherry stay at home. I'll be making the trip alone.

I could also post a job stating the place I want to be teleported to.
However, the charges in that case would be higher.
Because Palmasque is quite distant, I might end up attracting unnecessary attention.
I have no reason to be hasty, therefore, I'll take safer way.

When I was searching for ads on the guild wall, I found an ad that mentioned 'Dohona.'
I remember it from yesterday's conversation.

"Dohona?"

I ask an adventurer woman of Vale's Adventurer Guild.
She directs me to a person.
I don't know because I have never been to Dohona's Adventurer Guild, but there's a person standing in the transit area. He must be from Dohona's Adventurer Guild.
According to what Sherry said yesterday, Dohona should be the next town that falls on the route, but it's not mentioned on the paper.
And there's no other ad that matches with the cities mentioned on the paper.

“I want to go to Dobur, but you seem to be from Dohona’s Adventurer Guild.”

I ask the middle aged man who was standing in the transit area.

“Yes, because Dobur is too far from here.
“Too far?”
“It’s too far for two silver coins. I’ve been to Dobur before, so I can take you there, but the charges will be eight silver coins.”

Apparently, the ads posted on the wall mention only those towns which are not too far.
“Is it negotiable?”
Eight silver coins is four times the original!

“Negotiable?”
“You can’t go to Dobur with two silver coins. The closest I can take you for two silver coins is Shupowar. However, I don’t know if they go to Dobur from Shupowar.”

Seems reasonable.
It is reasonable.
But I know that I’m being taken advantage of.
Is this way of business normal in this world?

“Can you take me to Dobur from Shupowar for four silver coins?
“Let’s see… how about six silver coins to Dobur?”
“Hmm…”

You can’t go directly to a far off place, for the consumption of MP is considerable.
If you use up all of your MP, you’ll need Mana Pill to recover it.
Is that why there’s extra charge?

“I’ll take five silver coins then. No less than that.”

The old man is reducing the charges even more.
There’s a possibility that they don’t go to Dobur from Shupowar.
Do I have no other choice but to spend five silver coins?

“Alright, five silver coins for Dobur.”
“Thank you for the business.”

The old man laughs.
A handsome young man laughing like that is a different thing, but an old man doing that looks weird.

Damn it!
The trip has only just started, and I’ve already spent five silver coins!
I’m stIll not convinced about this trip.

When we reach Dobur’s Adventurer guild, someone asks the old man for Dohona, and he quotes three silver coins.
Everyone withdraws.
He’s plain greedy.
Serves him right.

By the way, I can go back from Dobur’s Adventurer Guild to Shupowar for two silver coins.
And from Dobur to Dohona for four silver coins.
The conclusion is, going there via Shupowar is cheaper.

That old man knew it clearly.
But connecting trips take longer, so five silver coins is not a bad deal.
However, the old man hid the fact that five silver coins was the market price, and didn’t quote it right from the start.
Eight is simply too much!

I return home from Dobur’s Adventurer Guild.
I wasted too much time in negotiation, and kept those two waiting for breakfast.
Dobur doesn’t seem to be at a distance that can be covered with two silver coins, and I confirmed that by going back to home.

When I arrived at home, my MP had decreased a bit.
Just like Field Walk, MP consumption of Warp as well seems to be dependent on distance.
The reason why this distance didn’t affect me as much as it affects other adventurers is because I have multiple jobs, including Wizard. Therefore, I have a lot more MP than other adventurers.

Whether Field Walk is more efficient or Warp, in terms of MP consumption, I can't verify it because I don't have Field Walk.

When you're stationed at adventurer guild, you'll often get customers in quick succession, not affording you any spare time to recover MP.
So you need to consume Mana Pill which is not free.
Therefore, the distance you cover with two silver coins is short.

Next morning. I return home after advancing further.
I can feel my MP decreasing even more than yesterday.
I'm not sure if I've even covered half of the total distance.
Is directly going to Palmasque really not possible?

When I returned, Sherry had made hide boots.
Combining this with yesterday's, she has made a complete collection of Hide Mittens, Hide Cap and Hide Boots.
Earlier, I was concerned about Sherry's constantly declining trust in those who taught her about Master Smith job, but not anymore.

"What are Master Smiths supposed to make after Hide Boots?"
"Club." (TL: Can also mean hammer, as mentioned in previous chapters.)
"Club?"

Sherry is now moving on to weapons.
She has finally caught up.
Does making a club require skills?

"However, the material used in making a Club is plank, dropped by Rub Shrub.
"Plank?"
"The monster that drops plank appears on higher floors."

I see. Such trap.
If a Master Smith is to make better equipment, they need to go to higher floors.
Well thought out.

A good equipment should use good materials indeed.
Cheaper materials have their limits.
But good materials are dropped by stronger monsters.

The items which monsters drop are originally parts of their own body.
You can't expect a weak monster to drop steel or orichalcum.
The monster that drops orichalcum must have orichalcum somewhere on its body.
It's rational.

"Can't we just buy it?"
"Umm… generally speaking, you make and sell hide equipment until you're able to hunt Rub Shrubs."
"Is that so?"
"If you buy materials, your profits decrease. Unless you want me to make it, I won't consider making it. There are many equipment after club which comprise solely of hide. I can try making them instead. It'll also serve as an alternative to my training."

Just like making a Dagger consumes more MP than making a Misanga, equipment which are further up the order would require more MP, even if they're made only of leather.
There's no significant change in profits, if you make more of simple items, or less of advanced items.
Because people who can make advanced items are fewer, they're supposed to make more. But there's no need for us to overdo it.

"I understand. You keep making Hide Mittens, Hide Caps and Hide Boots for now."
"Yes. Also, now that we can hunt monsters on 9th floor, we should try the labyrinth where Mino appears on 9th floor. That way, we can hunt monsters, and I can collect materials at the same time."

Is there really such a labyrinth?
If there's a labyrinth where Mino appears on 9th floor, I can hunt and Sherry can collect materials. That's killing two birds with one stone.

"Hmm. I don't think we have to go out of our way."

Because hide is a normal drop from Mino, there's no trouble in collecting it anyway.
And the monster on 9th floor of Vale's labyrinth is Slow Rabbit, the skin of which sells for twice as much as Mino's, so it's better from earnings standpoint.
Although I'm reluctant about fighting Rapid Rabbit again, it doesn't mean

we should just run away from it.
It's not good to bully weak monsters.

"Understood."
"Is there no labyrinth where the monster that drops plank appears on 9th floor?"
"Umm… the least floor where Rub Shrub appears is 12th. Although the order is different, monsters that appear from 1st floor to 11th are same for any labyrinth. Similarly 12th to 22nd floor, and so on."

So it was like that.
It's my first time hearing this.

Kobolds, Slow Rabbits, Minos etc, they seem to be the monsters that appear from 1st to 11th floor in every labyrinth.
This has indeed been the case for Quratar's and Vale's labyrinths.
Rub Shrub seems to appear from 12th floor to 22nd.

"The most I can do is try to look for a labyrinth where Rub Shrub appears on 12th floor."

There's gonna be quite a while before Sherry is able to make next equipment.
We can only make hide equipment for now, but I can't have her make in large quantities, so as not to fluctuate market price too much.

I finished afternoon exploration as soon as I could.
It's been ten days since Sherry came here.
It's the day Sherry's maid clothes were supposed to be ready.

"We are finishing early today? Are you going to take bath?"

When we return home, Roxanne asks me with seemingly expectant eyes.
No, they were certainly expectant eyes.
She seems to have taken a liking to bath.
Unfortunately, however, it's not time for bath.

"No, it's not time for bath. It's time to go to the merchant's place."

"Slave merchant? Do you intend to increase party members?"

She asks with eyes seemingly devoid of expectation.
No, they were certainly devoid of expectation.
And I don't know why, but the temperature seems to have dropped.
Or it might have only been my imagination.

"Not this time, unfortunately, I don't have enough money to afford one. But I do intend to add more party members. It's natural course of action to increase our battle strength. You two stay here for now."
"Yes."
"Understood."

It's better to make their mind up beforehand.
But I should tell them only that which is necessary.

The purpose of increasing party members is to increase battle strength, of course.
There is no implicit objective.
But…

"My objective is to increase battle strength, but I won't acquire someone who doesn't get along with Roxanne and Sherry.
"Okay."

Having a male slave is out of question because of the risk to these two.
I have no particular criteria anymore for next slave.
Granny is no option either.
Someone young would improve the battle strength more.

Someone who would motivate me.
Morale is an important factor in determining battle strength.
Someone young. Someone beautiful.
My motivation is slightly different.

The purpose of adding new party member is to increase battle strength.
It's natural course of action to increase battle strength.
It's decided then. We have to increase battle strength.
There's no helping it because we have to increase battle strength.

Yes.
It's rational.

“The reason for my visit this time is different. I have to pick Sherry’s clothes. Are you sure you don’t want the will changed, Roxanne?”
“I’m sure.”

Roxanne nods with confidence.
If Roxanne says it’s fine, it probably is fine.

“Sherry, do you want it changed? According to the will, you’ll be released in the event of my death.”
“I have only recently come under your care, so I’m fine with it.”
“Okay, no problem.”
“Thank you.”

I may die outside battle, so there’s no merit in dragging them to death with me.
To have Sherry released after my death is rational.

“It’s not like you’ll stab me while I’m asleep, just because you’ll be released.”
“No, if master dies in the house, surviving slave would be the suspect. Therefore, you’re more at risk in labyrinth.”
“Don’t scare me.”
“I won’t do it, of course.”

Sherry says coldly.
In labyrinth, there won’t be any need to dispose off the body.
There won’t be any further investigation, if it is stated that I died to a monster.
Labyrinth is definitely the best place for murder.

In labyrinth, however, I have Roxanne with me.
Sherry can’t act recklessly there either.

“I trust Sherry.”
“I’ll work hard to repay your trust. What do you have in the will for Roxanne-san? Will she also be released?”
“No.”
“I won’t be released if master is dead.”

Roxanne declares it herself.
It’s better than I saying it.
If I say it myself, it would seem like I’m forcing her.

“You won’t be?”
“To protect master is my only purpose. I would protect master’s life even if I have to give my own life. There’s no point in having myself released. If master dies, I will have failed in my duty, so it’s only natural to follow him in death. I would not like to live in a world where master is not alive.”

I’m in awe after listening to her reason.
Grateful. I really am grateful.

“Umm…”
“That’s what Roxanne feels. You don’t have to do it if you don’t want to. I may also die to illness. There’s no point in dying for that.”

The atmosphere is somewhat uncomfortable.
I feel like a soldier facing a kamikaze.

It was awkward to tell her about her release just like that.
So I had to explain it that way.
Sherry doesn’t have to follow me.

“Don’t you have anyone to inherit your slaves?”
“No.”
“Is that so? Then I would like you to have me released.”

Good.
She speaks her mind.
As expected of Sherry.
She is rational.

Chapter 68 - Jealousy

I went to the slave traders business in Vale and picked up Sherry's maid cloths.
I am introduced to a new slave while I'm there.

An 18 year old woman from the wolf tribe. She's quite cute.
Her hair is a little scruffy, and her skin complexion is a little bad, but there probably wouldn't be any problems after a little polishing.
If this were a school, I'd compare her to the one or two students in each class that stood out.
When I was in Japan, it's a level I'd take notice of.

However, things have changed.
Now that I have Roxanne and Sherry, I'm not interested.
You could say that I graduated and calmed down, or maybe that I'm used to a higher level of luxury?

Roxanne and Sherry will be waiting for me when I return home.
I don't need to be greedy.

A party is six people.
I should choose them carefully.
I can choose more than five people, but it wouldn't be worthwhile.
Five is the most effective amount.

"What do you think? She can't speak Brahim yet, but I'll be happy to sell her to you after she's learnt it."
"I'll pass this time, though she isn't bad."
"I understand."

That discussion is finished, and I declined Alan, the slave trader's offer.
I don't have enough money anyway, so there's no helping it.
I changed the topic quickly.

"Can I leave a will for Sherry?"
"Sure, what kind of will?"
"I'd like to free Sherry when I die."
"The change in the will comes to 300 nars, is that fine?"

I'll make a will for Sherry.
Since I only asked for one thing this time, the 30% discount doesn't work.
I pay three silver coins.

"That's fine."
"Then, please hold out your left arm."
"Ah."

It seems that the intelligence card is used to leave a will.
The slave trader pulls out my intelligence card and does something to it.
I check it after he's done.

Kaga Michio| 17 year old male| Freeman
Explorer
Owner of Slaves: Roxanne, and Sherry (releasing on death).

The will seems to be displayed on the intelligence card.
Saying that I'm releasing someone, and then not releasing them would be difficult.
Well, there's no problem if I don't show slaves my intelligence card.

"I'll give you this as well."

After he finished with my intelligence card, the slave trader passed me something.
It's papyrus.
It's folded with a wax seal on the center.

"What's this?"
"It's a letter of introduction to the slave trader in the Imperial Capital.
Though they won't have a Master Smith, it's still good to stop by at least once."

The Master Smith is already unnecessary.
There doesn't seem to be any slaves that stand out here anymore.
After I've built up my money, I'll go.

I returned home with the case of maid cloths.
I passed the case to Sherry.

“Some cloths for Sherry. Put them away in the wardrobe.”
“May I put them on?”
“That’s fine, it might be good.”

I nod. Sherry looks at me once, then goes to the corner of the room.
She starts taking her cloths off.

You’re changing your cloths here?
Well, there’s no need to be modest changing cloths.
Not anymore.

Since I always see, it’s nothing out of the ordinary.
Well, there’s not that many times that I can watch it so clearly.
Her slight bashfulness is nice.

“Um, can I wear mine too?”

While I was enjoying the sight, Roxanne interrupted me.
When I approve it, she leaves the room.

“While you were out we received a message from Luke. He’s made a successful bid on a green caterpillar monster card.”

Sherry speaks while she changes her cloths.

“Ah, the green caterpillar monster card.”
“Yes, with the substitute skill.”

It’s finally come?
I said it was fine if it was a little high, so it’s natural to get it soon.

“That’s all we need for the Misanga?”
“Yes, and it seems that a green caterpillar monster card cannot be fused with a weapon, or with a kobold monster card.”
“So there’s only the substitute skill?”
“Yes. The winning bid was 4,300 nars. The previous time it went for 3,900 nars, so the difference isn’t much.”

Sherry explains as she puts on the maid cloths.
She opens the buttons from the bottom.
The buttons on the maid cloths go up the back.

“That’s good. I’d complain if it was too high.”

I move around behind Sherry to help out.

“Thank you. They are quite smart, they’ve likely charged the very limit of the amount you’d pay before complaining.”

They’ve made a guess at how much they can get from me.

Roxanne comes back with her maid cloths.
She opens the buttons on her maid cloths.
Why is Roxanne changing here?

There are no bra’s in this world.
In other words, everything is exposed the moment Roxanne starts to remove cloths.

Jiggling.
They jiggle and bounce with the movement of undressing.
Soft, elastic, white fruit jiggles beautifully.
They swing like they are blowing in the wing.

So powerful.
Soon Roxanne puts the big things away.

“…Roxanne’s are big.”
“Ah, Roxanne, I’ll do up your buttons as well.”
“Thank you, Master.”

I moved to Roxanne’s back.
How should I comment on Sherry?

“Sherry, that suits you well. Your small stature is cute in it.”
“Thank you.”

Sherry's beauty is like a doll in maid cloths.
The charm of Roxanne's maid cloths is a more sensual womanly impression.
I love both of them.

The maid cloths are good things.
They emphasize their feminine charms.

"Master."

After I do up the buttons, Roxanne turns around.
"What about my cloths?"
"Of course, you look really good."
"Thank you. Oh, and…"

She looks away a little awkwardly.

"What's wrong?"
"Can you carry me like this?"

I don't need to respond.
I lift Roxanne with both arms.
She's rather light, and has a soft warm feeling.

Where should I carry her?
It's obvious.

"Wait a moment Sherry, and I'll carry you as well."

I carry Roxanne to the bedroom.

異世界迷宮でハーレムを 5
イラスト：四季童子
©蘇我捨彩／主婦の友社

TN: Scene change, goooooo!

Lack of sleep.
Last night I enjoyed the full service of two maids.

A maid serving me from the right, and a maid serving me from the left.
I fully enjoyed the service of the two maids showering me in affection.
Afterwards, we had a late dinner, followed by enjoying the path of the Sex Maniac some more.

Probably since it's my routine, I wake up in the morning at the same time as always.
My sleeping time probably wasn't enough.

I'm worried about going to the Labyrinth with lack of sleep.
I consider it, but it wouldn't be good to enter with a tired body that's slower than usual.
My health is alright.
My sleep was insufficient though.

I check on Roxanne and Sherry, but both of them seemed to be alright.
I could give a reason for not going, but I decide to go after all.
I'll just have to pay careful attention while hunting demons.

NT Ant is easily defeated with three spells. It seems things are alright?
We moved through Vale Labyrinth's ninth floor, and found a small room.

"Master, a treasure chest."

When we enter the small room, there's a small mound in the center.
A treasure chest.
It's been quite a while since we've seen one.

"Wait, wait, wait."

The young mustn't be impatient.
Roxanne had pierced it with her scimitar, and pulls back panicking.
Don't rush in immediately.
Your allowed to do things immediately in bed though.

Does Roxanne have lack of sleep too?
There's a chance it's a mimic.
I should prepare carefully.

I put the wand away, and pull out Durandal.
After I take a stance, I give Roxanne a nod.

"There isn't much chance of having a mimic boss on the lower floors."
"Really?"
"Yes. It doesn't seem to appear on the 11th or lower floors. It's possibly because there aren't many treasure chests on the lower floors. It's the 12th or higher floors that sometimes have a chance of a mimic boss."

Does the floor boss come out from a mimic?

Roxanne thrusts the scimitar while Sherry explains it.
The floor is cut open.
A silver coin comes out.

"Master, a silver coin."

In total, there were 13 silver coins. 1,300 nars.
It's a nice small sum of money.
Won't more come out?
Well, that's expected for a lower floor.

Treasure chests contain equipment, or things from the item box of people who died in the labyrinth.
13 coins, is the previous owner a Lv13 Explorer?
I give a small prayer to the previous owner, and then receive the coins from Roxanne.

"I'll use my sword to fight for a while."

I've used a fair bit of MP, so I'll use Durandal to recover since I already have it out.
We leave the small room, and Roxanne leads our exploration.

Roxanne guides us.
She guides us to a place with four NT Ants.
A group.

“Here they come.”
“I’m going in.”

First I swing Durandal at the left NT Ant.
I parry an attack from the ant and then swing my sword again.
The NT Ant on the left is defeated. Sherry is fighting the next one.
I sneak around behind it and attack it.

Under the center NT Ant, an orange magic formation appears.
The skill.
NT Ant has a skill that shoots poison.
It seems quite dangerous.

Turning, I extend my body and arm towards the central NT Ant and swing Durandal.
It’s a really bad posture, but it’s unavoidable.
Durandal cancels the demons skill with [incantation interruption].
There is no poison.

I’m relieved, but I feel pain.
There’s a blow to my right thigh.
The NT Ant that I left behind attacked me.

I feel the impact to my thigh through my whole body.
It’s quite a shock.
Even with [Plating] it’s this strong?
It doesn’t look bad, but it feels horrible.

Gah.
My heart strains from the shock.
It’s more shock than pain.
It’s like someone grabbed my heart.

“Master!”

Sherry and Roxanne seem to be saying something, but I can't hear it well.
This is dangerous.
I don't think it was that big an attack, but was it?
I swing Durandal to my left and absorb some HP.

However, I don't feel like I recovered at all.
I start to break out in a sweat.
It feels like the shock is getting bigger.
Why?

I clutch my chest.
I collapse down onto my knees.
It's hard to endure the pain.

Even my head feels like it's been hit by a major earthquake.
My trembling doesn't stop.
I can't think. I'm starting to feel delirious and have a temperature.

"xx"

Sherry comes forward and says something.
I can't understand what she's saying anymore.
All my nerves are under fire from the shock.
I can't think about anyone else.

Sherry's face approaches me. Why?
Her lips are pressed against mine.
Sherry's tongue moves & enters my mouth.
What are you doing during combat?

I accept her, even though I don't understand the reason.
I open my mouth and let her in.
A soft, gentle tongue.
Something rolls from the tongue.

Something replaced her tongue.
The thing which rolled in is obstructing my mouth.
I swallowed it to remove the obstruction.
After that, I stuck to Sherry's mouth.

I twirled around Sherry's tongue, that entered my mouth again.
Twirling, clinging, and sucking.
Sherry's tongue tastes like I've forgotten everything.
Entwining my tongue with Sherry's, it feels like I'm forgetting the impact.

Actually, the shock seems to be going.
Sherry's kiss is acting like a tranquilizer.

The shock is really decreasing.
The burden on my whole body is leaving.
The pain leaves, the dullness leaves, and the cloud over my mind clears up.
It feels like my heart has been released by whatever was grabbing it.

The burning is gone.
The trembling has stopped.
My thoughts are back.

What was that?
What happened?

"Are you alright?"

Sherry asks, as she separates her mouth from mine.

"Oh… yes."
"I fed you the antidote pill. It seems you were poisoned by the NT Ant."

I was poisoned?
Poison.
So it was poison.

I was poisoned.
It came from the attack by the NT Ant.
The shock was due to the poison.

It was a tremendous shock.
It was a terrifying shock.
I'd surely die if I was left like that.

This is bad. This isn't the time to think about it.
My mind is clear.
We are still in combat.
Two NT Ant's are left.

Looking at my surroundings, Roxanne is fighting the other two.
She's dodging them perfectly.
I attack the nearest demon with Durandal.

I cut it from the side, since it's facing Roxanne.
With each blow, the remaining burden on my body lifts.
The damage done by the poison is being recovered by [HP absorption].

They aren't a problem if I beat them with Durandal.
The remaining NT Ant's are beaten straight away.

"Master, are you alright?"
"I'm alright, sorry about that. I've caused you to worry, Roxanne. Lets go back to the small room we were in a little while ago."

I don't think there is a problem, but I should confirm my physical condition.
We pick up the [Sting]'s, and return to the small room with the treasure chest.

"It's safe here."
"I was saved. It's thanks to both of you. Roxanne kept the demons busy, while Sherry gave me treatment. Thank you, thank you both very much."

I wasn't able to deal with the poison at all, probably because it was my first time.
I didn't even realize it was poison, and didn't think of taking the antidote.
The poison would definitely have been dangerous if I was alone.
The labyrinth is a terrifying place.

"Thank you. We did what was natural."
Roxanne puffs up her chest with pride, while Sherry turns away embarrassed.
Yes.
She had to transfer it mouth to mouth.
This is a different embarrassment to kissing.

“But, I wanted to do it as well, and Sherry’s done it twice now.”

Roxanne mutters in a quiet voice.
Ah. Previously when Sherry was out of MP, I fed her medicine mouth to mouth.
This is the second time.

“Do you want some water? Get out your cups.”

I take a small tub from the rucksack.
I get some water with a [Water wall].

“Roxanne?”
“Yes?”
“I’m still a bit sore, can you give me some water with mouth to mouth?”

I asked Roxanne, and she raised a cup up in front of her chest.

Chapter 69 - Palmasque

After leaving the labyrinth, I head to the adventurer guild alone.
The poison is all gone now. My mind is clear. There's no uncomfortable feeling.
Thanks to Durandal, I have recovered my HP as well. There's no damage to my body either.

I resume my trip, and visit more adventurer guilds.
Today, I reached Zabir.
According to what Sherry said, this town is situated on the border of the Empire.
Next stop from here is Palmasque.

I match the note with the ads posted on the wall of Zabir's Adventurer Guild.
There's nothing written that looks like 'Palmasque.'

"I want to go to Palmasque."
"We go to Palmasque three times a day: In the morning, at noon and in the evening. Charges are five silver coins per person. The one in the morning has already departed. Next one is scheduled for noon. There are four more hours to go."

I ask the stationed adventurer, to which he replies.
But there's no clock inside to tell exactly when it's noon.
I'll be in trouble if there's no one outside to confirm the time from the position of the sun.

I return home because there was nothing else for me to do.
I immediately go outside to check the position of the sun.
It's earlier in the morning in Quratar than in Zabir.
There are about six more hours till noon. Two-third of that will be four hours.

So there's a difference of about two hours between Quratar and Zabir?
Considering there's a time difference even between Quratar and the Imperial Capital, it doesn't seem that much.
Difference of two hours means they're about 30 degrees apart.

My MP decreased considerably.
I wonder if I can go directly to Palmasque at this rate.
If my MP decreases even more, will it become negative?

Should I take the risk of going directly to Palmasque?
No, my MP is not enough. There's no need to inflict unnecessary damage to myself.

"What were you looking for?"
"I have to wait for four hours, so I was trying to confirm time."
"Four hours? Then I'll tell you when it's time."

I can depend on Roxanne's body clock, it seems.
I can't tell the exact time anyway.
But there's no knowing if her body clock is accurate either.

After breakfast, I go to the merchant guild.
I buy the Caterpillar Monster Card from Luke, the broker.
Because I have already used Appraisal, I know it's not fake.
Again, I opt not to verify it.

When I was in the waiting room of the merchant guild, I saw a familiar face.
Exceptionally good-looking, the leader of Harz duchy knights, Gozer.
Even though he was just sitting there, he looked so picturesque.
An overwhelming presence could be sensed.

He is good-looking.
For this reason, I don't want Roxanne to see him.
I don't want her to see any good looking man.
I wish my worries were unfounded.

In the past, Henan was hit with calamity because the people there were anxious. (TL: The only thing I found is famine in China that mostly affected Henan province. If someone has more accurate details of the event, please do tell us.)
I'm worrying for no reason. I shouldn't act like a fool.
Even Taishan can collapse. Even a pillar can fall because of a single joint.
Even a sage can die.
But Taishan hasn't collapsed. The pillar is still standing. The sage is alive somewhere.

If a sage can die, why can't a good-looking man?
Yes, die!
Go, die!
Die right now!

"Oh, what a coincidence. Are you here for auction?"

I seem to have been noticed because I was cursing too much.
I wanted to ignore him as much as possible.
But Gozer has such a refreshing smile about his face.

"For equipment related matter."
"I see. Well, that's the most important thing to an adventurer after all."
"And you, Gozer-dono?"

I step froward to cover those two behind me.
Sherry too, I don't want her to see him.
But she has already gone ahead to read some book.
She seems to be more interested in books than in good-looking men.

"Because the duke's work includes socializing, I'm here to acquire a gift item."
"Gift item?"

Socializing is a part of a noble's job.
He will surely be acquiring it through auction.
Because it has to be a rare item.
Getting rid of labyrinths in their territory is another part of their job.

"It's soon to be the third imperial prince's wedding. The prince intends to move to his own house after getting married. How about Orb of Self Destruction for their soon-to-be-born child? or Elixir? I'm having difficulty in deciding on something appropriate for the new couple."

So he wants to move to his own house.
He doesn't intend to succeed. He wants to be independent.
The third imperial prince huh?

"That does sound difficult."
"Do you have something?"

“Unfortunately not.”
I have no reason to be in possession of such items.

“Well, choosing gifts takes time. If you come into possession of Might of Ryozen perchance, we would like to purchase it from you.”
“How about Palmasque Mirror?”

I heard from Sherry that it’s a popular gift among nobles.

“Nobles in the east use it often, but we, in the north, hardly get a chance to get one, as it’s difficult for us to go to Palmasque.”
“I see.”

If you can get hold of a specialty item, you can use it as a gift.
Of course you can.

“Because there’s going to be wedding of an important figure in the Imperial Capital, I’m not sure if I can get one from there. Can you perhaps get it from somewhere else?”
“Probably.”
“Well then, if you can get it from somewhere else, we would like to purchase it from you. You can meet us at the imperial palace in Bode.”

I’m not sure if I can go directly to Palmasque, but I can go to Zabir at least.
Because Zabir is closest to Palmasque, can I acquire mirror from there for cheap?
Alternatively, I can rest in Zabir to recover my MP, and then go to Palmasque.

“Okay.”
“Well then, have this.”
“This is?”
“The emblem of Harz duchy. If you show this at the imperial palace, the duke and I will be informed immediately. Please make sure not to use it needlessly, as you’ll be charged with the crime of abusing it.”

He hands me a piece of cloth with an insignia on it.
The emblem is well made.
I’m not sure if it’s weaved or embroidered, but it looks really difficult to make.
So there isn’t much risk of producing a fake.

Is this thing a sort of letter of introduction?
I have received yet another letter of introduction. Is this the season of letter of introductions?

“Sorry for the wait, Gozer-sama. There were some guests.”

When I put the emblem in my rucksack, I hear someone from behind me.
Luke.

“Am I perhaps that guest?”
“Oh, you know each other?”

When I turn around, Luke gets surprised.
So even nobles use services of a broker for auction?
Luke probably has connections in the Harz duchy.

“I guess.”
“Is that so? Then please excuse my intrusion.”

Two subordinates of Gozer, who were accompanying Luke, leave.
Those two were elves. They were good-looking, not to mention.
Damn it!

Sigh “Are all elves good-looking?”
“It seems so.”

Roxanne replies without any expression.
She doesn’t seem to have any interest in them.

“An elf and a broker, a perfect combination.”

Oh no! Sherry seems to be interested.

“Perfect combination?”
“Elves and brokers, no matter how much I try to, I can’t understand these people.”
“Is that so?”
“Whenever elves come across dwarves, they tell us to ‘grow up.’ And brokers…”

Apparently, elves and dwarves are not on friendly terms.
Sherry too doesn't seem to be interested in elves.
Why she distrusts brokers, however, was left unsaid.
I wonder what it would be like if there was an elf broker.

"So getting acquainted with a broker or an elf is out of question?"
"Even if they're elves, not everyone is bad. It's important to try to get to know them first."

Sherry is rational after all.
Her hatred is not unconditional.

"Let's return home?"
"There are three more hours left. We can go to Vale."

Roxanne says upon arriving at home.
Roxanne's body clock seems reliable.
Sherry making equipment, breakfast, negotiating with Luke.
Did it all take just one hour?

On Roxanne's suggestion, we go to Vale's labyrinth.
There was something from the conversation with Gozer that I didn't understand, so I ask Sherry.

"What is Orb of Self Destruction?"
"A suicide attack item."
"Scary."
"If you use Orb of Self Destruction, you inflict massive damage to your opponent in exchange for your own life. Adults, however, rarely use it. It's believed that there's a chance for it to not activate when used by a child no more than three years old. If it doesn't activate, you don't inflict damage, and you also don't lose your life. If the child survives, they can acquire Wizard job."

I heard that you consume some sort of medicine in childhood to acquire Wizard job.
Was the medicine the Orb of Self Destruction?
Because it's used by a child, it's popular as a gift to a newborn?
Going by its name, however, I can't consider it a gift.

It's perhaps something similar to my bonus skill Full HP Release.
I obtained Wizard class by using bonus skill Full MP Release, it seems.
I could acquire Wizard job by releasing all of my HP.
But I would have died if I did.

If used by a child, however, there is a chance for it to miss.
In which case, they can acquire Wizard job.
I wonder if it's some kind of bug.
People here seem desperate to acquire Wizard job.

"And Elixir?"
"It's medicine of the highest grade. It can immediately and completely recover any injuries, fatigue and negative status effects."
"There was something else, which I don't remember, what's that?"
"Might of Ryozen. It's a raw material used in making Elixir."

Ryozen huh?
In short, these are all luxury items used as gifts among nobles.

"I see. Thank you."

After talking to Sherry, I continue to hunt.
I could also stay at home and use the shadow of the house to tell the time, not just rely Roxanne's body clock.
There are three chances after all.

"Master, it's about time."

Roxanne says when I take a Slow Rabbit out with Cook job activated.
By the way, does the chance of rare drop increase with the level of Cook job?
Lately, Slow Rabbits have been dropping more meat.

"It's time already?"
"It has been about three hours since we came to the labyrinth."

Sherry says the same thing.
The bill has been passed by two-third majority.

“Let’s hunt one more.”
“Okay.”
“Well then, I’ll have to trouble you one more time.”

I bring Durandal out, and send Roxanne to search for one more monster.
I take the rabbit out, and recover my MP.

I went to Zabir directly from Vale’s labyrinth.
Although not completely, my MP decreased to the extent that I could clearly tell.
To be specific, it decreased more than in the morning.
On the way back, I should better go to the labyrinth first to recover my MP, and then head to home.
I was right in bringing Roxanne along.

No, I’m not really sure.
Now I know why my MP decreased more than in the morning.
Zabir should be more distant from Quratar than from Vale.
An airplane wouldn’t be fast or slow depending on airflow. Whether I’m going east or west shouldn’t increase or decrease consumption of MP. (TL: I’m not sure about this. It wouldn’t be fast or slow, but it would affect fuel efficiency, right? Take what the author said with a pinch of salt.)

Considering that, consumption of MP probably depends on the number of people.
Earlier, I covered this distance alone using Warp, therefore, I can tell the difference.
If the number of people increases consumption of MP, it was a bad decision to bring Roxanne and Sherry along.
Oh well, there’s no helping it now.
I ask the same adventurer from the morning.

“Can I go to Palmasque now?”
“Ah, you’re the one from earlier. So there are three people now. Noon bell is about to ring. We’ll be departing after that.”

We are three people while the party can be up to six.
Excluding the adventurer who’ll be taking us to Palmasque, there can be five people at a time.
Beside my group, two more people can join.
First five to join get to travel, it seems.

“These two will stay here.”
“Very well.”

After that, I disband my party.
Sherry goes toward the wall where the ads are posted.
Unlike Roxanne, Sherry has a way to kill her time.

The noon bell rings.

“Those who want to go to Palmasque, please gather here. Charges are five silver coins per person.”

Five silver coins to Palmasque.

“Welcome. Anyone is free to enter Palmasque. You can buy and sell as well. It’s necessary to keep copper coins with you. Taking residents of Palmasque outside is prohibited. All the buildings in the town, except for the adventurer guild, use protective cement, therefore, Field Walk can only be used through the adventurer guild. Outside the adventurer guild is the check post. You are required to verify your Intelligence Card there. You’ll also be required to pay entry toll of one silver coin in addition to the charges.”

The adventurer from Palmasque’s Adventurer Guild, who’s in charge of taking us to Palmasque, gives a long explanation of rules.
Going to Palmasque seems to be a hassle.

Chapter 70 - Mirror

I went back from Palmasque's Adventurer Guild to Zabir's myself.
Normally, they would immediately gather customers for next trip, but the adventurer who brought me to Palmasque was not doing so.
Because of break.

My MP decreased so much that it could clearly be felt.
Zabir is closer to Palmasque than Quratar.
That being the case, moving between Palmasque and Quratar via Zabir seems a daunting task.
Even more daunting, however, is moving between Palmasque and Quratar directly.
I must also take my party into account.

"How much does a Palmasque Mirror cost?"

I ask the adventurer stationed at Zabir.

"Palmasque Mirror? Depends on its size."
"About this long."

I use both my hands to show him the size — from top of my head down to my chest.

"From forty to fifty silver coins to as much as a gold coin. Prices of decorated ones are sky high. If you can go to a workshop in Palmasque, however, you can get it for a little cheaper."

The adventurer replies.
I have no idea what decorated mirrors are like. It must be decorated on the rim, otherwise, it would difficult to use if it were decorated on the surface.

I form party with Roxanne and Sherry again, and move to a corner of the guild.

"Sherry, open your Item Box."
"Okay."

I ask Sherry to open her Item Box, and hand her some silver coins.
Because one column (x10) is reserved for Antidote, there are nine columns (x10) still free.
I hand both Roxanne and Sherry a silver coin in respect of entry toll.

“We’ll go to Palmasque now. You’ll be buying a mirror there. Don’t buy decorated, but the plain one. Its price should not exceed the coins I gave you. Entry toll is one silver coin.”
“Are you not going with us?”
“Yeah, kinda.”

Since there’ll be verification of Intelligence Card outside the guild, they’ll find out that I’m not an adventurer. Therefore, I’ll be staying inside.
So, I’ll leave the shopping to these two.

“I understand.”
“How much time will it take? One hour? Return to the adventurer guild in an hour. If you can’t find a mirror, come back immediately.”

I can’t stay in Palmasque’s Adventurer Guild for long, or I may look suspicious.
I should better leave for somewhere else.
I’ll get bored of waiting too.
If you’re in a party, you can figure out general direction of the party members.

I Warp us through the wall of Zabir’s Adventurer Guild to Palmasque’s.
My MP is really low now.
It decreased more now than it did when I returned from Palmasque earlier.

It decreased.
It decreased considerably.
It decreased completely.

Consumption of MP increases with the number of party members after all.
There’s another possibility that the consumption is more when going eastward.
Even more likely possibility is that my ability is not adequate.

“We will proceed then.”

I almost went out of the guild with Roxanne and Sherry subconsciously.
I know.
It's because my MP is really low at the moment.

I first went from Vale to Zabir, and then moved between Zabir and Palmasque twice.
I have used up most of my MP.
I consume a Mana Pill after parting with those two.
I look like a good-for-nothing husband whose wife has left him.

Those two get their Intelligence Cards verified, pay the entry toll, and wave at me.
Even slaves are allowed entry into Palmasque, it seems.
Well, the adventurer who brought me here said that anyone is free to enter the town.

There's no reason for those two to come back to me.
There isn't any.
No reason whatsoever.
There isn't any, is there?

Because they hate me, they would seek refuge to Palmasque.
I'm afraid that may be so.
There is no reason for Roxanne and Sherry to follow me forever.
Roxanne mentioned earlier about switching masters.

I know I'm not an able master because I don't know anything about this world.
I even think of running away from unfavorable situations.
They would lose all respect for such a master, of course.
I'm useless.

I'm overwhelmed with negative thoughts.
I take another pill.

So wasteful.
But I have to replenish my MP.

My mind is clear now.
Now that I'm calm, I know there's no reason for them to not come back.

I have faith in both Roxanne and Sherry.
There's no problem.

Having calmed down, I exhale deeply, and take a look outside.
The view of Palmasque from inside the guild is pretty exotic.
It feels artificial. Tall white buildings are lined up.
With few small white buildings here and there.

All the buildings are white probably due to protective cement.
It's quite different from the Imperial Capital and Quratar. Actually, there's nothing like it even in Japan.
The closest to it I can think of is that greek city off Aegean Sea.
It feels like an oasis in a desert.

Although I say that, there's no trace of green in this town.
No trees. No forest.
But that doesn't mean it's a desert.
There's weed growing in vacant spaces between buildings.

It felt strange, but then I realize.
Were all the trees cut?
If there's a large tree, Field Walk can be used.
Because they used protective cement on all the buildings, they couldn't leave the trees out there.

I have no idea what their reason in doing this may be.

Well, I can use Warp even through protective cement.
But that doesn't mean I'll go as far as using it.
What if I get found out?
I can probably do that in the dark of night, but surely not in broad daylight.

I wait till I was completely calm, and then go to Vale's labyrinth.
I must test whether I can Warp without any problem.

My MP decreased considerably yet again.
It won't be exaggeration if I say it was completely out.
So, the consumption of MP is high when going westward just as well.
Distance is what matters.

I can definitely not make a return trip as I am.
And one way trip is no good either.
I wonder whether MP becomes negative if decreased beyond limit.
It's possible.
I recover my MP in Vale's labyrinth using Durandal.
After that, I return to Zabir's Adventurer Guild.
It is necessary to establish a rest stop somewhere on route to Palmasque.

"Is there any labyrinth around here?"

I ask the stationed adventurer.

"Err… what kind of labyrinth are you looking for?"
"I have no particular preference. Whichever is closest."
"Closest one, alright. Go via eastern exit and head straight. It's not under the management of explorers, but there's a way from here because many people go there from the guild. The road is branched up midway. Take left, you'll find the labyrinth. It's close, you can walk to it if you can't use Field Walk."

I thought I would have to use two silver coins for Field Walk, but the labyrinth seems to be nearby.
Is it same as Vale's labyrinth, that is right next to city walls?

He could advise me to use Field Walk service, and I would have to spend two silver coins. But he didn't.
He's not crafty.
He's honest.
I thank him, and leave the adventurer guild.

Zabir is rather serene.
Red bricks and greenery go along quite well.
In total contrast of Palmasque's white buildings and absence of trees.
But I may be wrong in judging only by the appearance.

City walls made of reddish brown bricks look splendid.
About three meters high.
There's a small gate on the side.
About a meter wide, single swing gate.

Above the gate is a turret.
The gate-keeper seems to be there.
I may have to crouch if I am to go through this gate.
It looks more like a back-door than a gate.

Past the gate is a field, which turns into a forest.
The forest isn't dense. Groves of the trees aren't spread far. There are many openings.
Inside the forest are trails left by people.
Is this perhaps the way the adventurer in the guild was talking about?

After walking for about five minutes, I'm standing in front of the labyrinth.
There's no one at the entrance.
Is this what he meant when he said that it's not under the management of explorers?

If there was an explorer here, I could immediately go to higher floors, but I'll have to start with 1st floor now.
I take Durandal out.
Because Roxanne isn't here, I wander around looking for monsters.
I now understand true value of Roxanne in labyrinth.

After that, I go to Vale's labyrinth, and then return home.
I take some time out for siesta to make up for lack of sleep.
After I wake up, I go to the labyrinth to recover my MP fully, and then head to Palmasque.
No matter how much the distance is, it's fine as long as I recover MP along the way.

Those two were already there.
Both of them are holding luggage in front of them.
They seem to have bought two mirrors.

Damn.
It's thoughtful of them to buy two, but what about transportation?
What if they get damaged during transportation?
They didn't think it through.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting."
"It's alright. We have bought the mirrors."

“Yes.”
“Let’s go home then?”

Oh well, there’s no helping it.
There’s no choice but to test it out.
I Warp us from Palmasque’s Adventurer Guild to home.

When we arrive at home, the ground becomes distorted.
It’s distorted. It’s screaming.
The ground turns into liquid. Darkness envelopes. The air stagnates.
The atmosphere feels crushing.

The cause, not to mention, is excessive use of MP.
It has been quite a while since I last experienced this condition.

I’m useless.
Oh god.
I beg your pardon.
Did I do something against your will?

“Master can really go to Palmasque directly. As expected of master.”
“…Just barely. Drop the luggage. We’re going to the labyrinth. Quickly look for a monster there.”

I ask Roxanne.
To be praised in such a condition feels really awkward.
We go to 4th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth.

I can’t bail out of this situation without a sacrifice.
Survival comes first.

Quratar’s labyrinth is closer than Vale’s from our home.
The shorter the distance, the lower the consumption of MP.
And the monsters of 4th floor which can be taken out in one blow of Durandal are perfect for the job at hand.

Although I think so, the monsters that come out are two Spi Spiders and one Cheap Sheap.
Please! Not the groups!

What's more, Spi Spider can use poison type attacks.
I may be poisoned again if I fight.

Because Spi Spiders are native to 3rd floor of Quratar's labyrinth, they also appear alongside monsters of 4th floor.
I didn't think it through.
I'm not good at thinking.

Roxanne had best intention. She obediently searched for the monsters.
She searched for the monsters without arguing with me.
Had I thought about it a bit, I would have realized this would happen on 4th floor.

Damn my pea of a brain.
I'm not good at thinking after all.

Somehow, I take all three of them out with Durandal.
My mind is clear now.
Now that I think calmly about it, there was no need to be scared of only two Spi Spiders.
Not running away is the answer.

I ended up putting an undignified sight in front of Roxanne and Sherry.
Having recovered MP, we return home.

"This mirror was chosen by Roxanne-san."

When we arrive at home, Sherry unwraps the mirror.
It's a medium-sized table-top mirror.
A stand is attached on its back.

"I was able to buy something good thanks to master."
"I had only heard about Palmasque Mirror before. It's my first time seeing how clear it reflects."

That said, it's an ordinary mirror.
Rather, isn't the reflection slightly dull?
Well, it's not a surprise, considering polished metal is used as a mirror in this world.

“At any rate, it’s really good.”
“Thank you, master.”
“This mirror costed fifty five silver coins. The plain one costed thirty five.”

They seem to have used up all the money I gave them.
The stand on its back costs twenty silver coins?
That’s too much!

Plain one, however, is slightly smaller in size.
Ten silver coins can be attributed to the difference in length.

“I didn’t choose this one only for the stand, but also for its size.”
“I thought larger one would be easier to use. Was I wrong?”
“No, not at all. You made the right decision.”

I tell Roxanne.

“People buy Palmasque Mirror for decoration purpose, not for daily use. It doesn’t matter if the price is high, because we can resell it for even higher. Those in Palmasque are aware of it, therefore, they decorate the rims of the mirror with gold, silver and/or jewels.”

Sherry explains.
Is the other mirror decorated too?

Although I say that, I have not yet decided to sell it to the duke of Harz.
I’m not sure if something chosen by Roxanne will be up to a noble’s liking.
Plain one would be better.

“Is there anything we can do to add value?”
“Glassworks, mirrorworks, clockworks, goldworks, silverworks, jewelworks — there’s no match for Palmasque in these crafts.”
“There are clocks too?”

I had no idea there were clocks in this world.
Let alone seeing one, I haven’t even heard about it.

“Because Palmasque is the home of glassworks.”
“Are clocks made of glass?”
“Sand is not visible unless it is contained in glass.”

Hourglass huh?

“Well, they have some talented people there, it seems.”
“Entire island of Palmasque is talented.”

Indeed, there were no mountains.
As far as I could see from inside the guild, at least.

“Wow.”
“Because it’s an island, craftsmen and artisans can’t run away. Therefore, the arts and crafts of Palmasque stay in Palmasque.”

Is that why Field Walk is not allowed outside the adventurer guild?
To ensure that their techniques are not leaked outside?
Sounds like a terrible place. There’s no freedom for craftsmen and artisans there.

“Because it’s an island, there’s no labyrinth either?”
“It seems so.”

Sherry nods to my question.
Apparently, we can’t establish a rest stop in Palmasque.

Chapter 71 - Business

“So, it’s finally time.”

I sat up and made a declaration.
After returning from Palmasque, I should do it.
I take the green caterpillar’s monster card from the item box.
I remove the Misanga on my ankle, and pass it to Sherry.

Accessory: Misanga – one empty skill slot.

I switched the Misanga I had without anyone noticing.
To the one with the empty skill slot.

“Ah, yes.”
“I’m certain that Sherry will show off her talent.”
“Well, I think it’s a horrible superstition that a master smith who makes a sacrificial misanga with their first misanga is talented.”

Sherry is rational.
She keeps a tight hold on her reasoning.
However, she’s not completely calm.
I won’t tell her that the misanga I passed her, isn’t her first one.

Miracles happen to those who believe in them. TN: イワシの頭も信心から – This is a Japanese proverb, “A sardines head comes from belief.” I had to look up the meaning, it comes from sardine heads being hung up to chase off spirits with their smell.

A drowning man will grab at a straw. TN: More proverbs.
An impatient beggar won’t get much.
Those who believe, shall be saved.
Belief is passed onto your descendants. TN: No idea about this one, so I guessed と孫子も言っている.

Soldiers shouldn’t jump to conclusions
Even though victory has been taken before, there’s no guarantee this battle will be won.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
Ask, and it shall be given you.

“Well, even if it is just a folk tale, Sherry just has to become an example of a master smith who succeeded. What do you think Roxanne?”
“Right. Sherry will surely succeed, because she was chosen by Master.”

I used Roxanne to motivate Sherry.
The joy will be greater after being under pressure.
It’s my job to put the pressure on.
I’m not sure what would happen if the fusion fails.

That?
What happens if it fails?
If I pressure her, and she fails, aren’t I really bad?

Will it be alright?
You’ll succeed won’t you?
Is there a chance it’s just been luck so far?
Is there a chance to fail at a low level, even if there’s an empty skill slot?

It’s not a 100% guarantee yet.
It’s not definite that it will succeed.

“I’m fusing it.”
“No, wait. Crap, is it too late? Damn. Sorry. Yes, please make it."

What will I do if it fails?
I’m giving off a suspicious look as I think about it.
Well, I don’t know if there’s a chance of failure.
Maybe it will be alright?

Sherry is rational.
She’ll probably be alright, even if she fails.
There must be a lot of master smiths who failed.

Even if it fails, it’s a trial we’ve been given by God.
If we pass the trial, there will be happiness.
The poor people become happy. God’s country is open to us.
It’s the new moon after the seven trials.

As I pray to the moon, Sherry begins the fusion.
Light is emitted.
The dazzling light calms down before long.
I hold my breath as I watch.

Accessory: Sacrificial Misanga – substitute skill.

It's fine.
It was a success.

"I did it."
"That was bad for my heart."
"As expected of Sherry. Sherry succeeds as a master smith. Master expected it so there was nothing to worry about. Master knows how talented you are."

Roxanne says it cheerfully.
Even though I expected it in reality, the stress got to me and I tensed up.

"Thank you, Roxanne."
""Well, it's good. As expected of Sherry."
"Yes, thank you."

Well, it turned out alright.
I talk to avoid suspicion.

Kaga Michio|Male|17 years old.
Explorer Lv35|Hero Lv32|Wizard Lv34|Monk Lv34|Cook Lv30
Equipment: Wand|Leather Shoes|Leather Gloves|Leather Hat|Leather Armor|Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne|Female|16 years old.
Beast Warrior Lv22
Equipment|Scimitar|Leather Shoes|Leather Gloves|Leather Hat|Leather Jacket|Wooden Shield

Sherry|Female|16 years old.
Master Smith Lv19
Equipment:Club|Waterproof Leather Mittens|Leather Hat|Leather Jacket|Leather Shoes

We went straight to Vale's labyrinth while wearing the sacrificial misanga.
We hunt rabbits and other creatures while we are in a good mood.

Also, if I wear another misanga while wearing the sacrificial misanga, only the first one is effective as equipment.
If I use [Analyze] on myself while wearing two, only one is displayed.

If I wear a misanga on my right ankle, and then equip the sacrificial misanga on my left ankle, [Analyze] will just display the misanga.
If I then remove the misanga from my right ankle, nothing will be displayed as equipped by [Analyze].
In this state, [Analyze] has probably decided that the sacrificial misanga on my left ankle is invalid equipment.

Since it isn't displayed, I don't think there is a possibility of the effect being active.
Sherry says the effect won't work unless I re-equip it.
Wearing two sacrificial misanga will not have the second one become automatically active after the first has been expended.
Equipping large amounts of them at once to prevent many attacks doesn't work, so trying to sell large amounts of them to make money won't work.

After hunting through most of the day, we arrive at Vale labyrinths ninth floor boss room.
A rapid rabbit is killed by making good use of [Overwhelming].
Since we already know how to fight it, we managed to beat it without a difficult fight.
Everything ended without any problems.

"What demon is on the tenth floor of Vale's Labyrinth?"
"NT Ant."

Sherry shares her knowledge.
The NT Ant?
It's not a good feeling since I've been poisoned by one before.

We go to the tenth floor, and hunt demons.
Three water spells are required to beat a Lv10 NT Ant.
There's no problem if they can be defeated with three spells.
It seems we can fight fine on Vale Labyrinth's tenth floor.

After leaving the Labyrinth, I'll go to the Imperial Capital to do some market research.
I should examine the price of mirrors before I bring one along.
I leave Sherry & Roxanne to prepare dinner, and I head out alone.

A mirror is a high level luxury in a grocery store.
There's a mirror hanging on the wall, with a gaudy frame attached to it.
It has a decoration made from wood which is twisted into a pattern.

That's the sort of decoration that mirrors have?
It's a useless decoration.
There is a desktop mirror with a stand as well, but there doesn't appear to be any full length mirrors or triple mirrors.

The price is higher than I expected.
The cheapest one, which is similar to mine, is 18,000 nars.
The expensive one…. is much higher in price.
The expected price is 3-4 times more than the price in Palmasque.

I leave quickly because it's so high.
I don't know what the shop attendant thought of me, after I only heard the price.
They might sprinkle salt later.

The next morning, we make plans to move onto Quratar's tenth floor as well.
We start with the ninth floor boss.

"The NT Ant boss is the Hunt Ant. It's similar in strength to the NT Ant, but it's poison attack skill is stronger, and it's regular attack has a high chance of poisoning."

Sherry gives us a briefing.
It won't be a powerful enemy at all if it's strength is the same.
For Roxanne.

We entered the boss room.
Roxanne evades attacks from the ant up front, and I was around the back with Durandal.
It seems we can still use this strategy.

“What demon is on the tenth floor?”
“The Escape Goat.”
“Ahh.”

Escape goats on the upper floors will be troublesome.
The first escape goat began to run away after three spells, as I expected.
It seems to still run away after it’s lost half it’s health.
Three more will make it six spells to defeat it.

After it begins to run away, I have to time three spells perfectly.
If I’m even a little off it will get away.
On Quratar’s tenth floor, since NT Ants often appear after the ninth floor, I don’t want to take on a mixed group.

What happens if we encounter more demons on the higher floors that run away?
If seven spells are needed, it would probably start running after the fourth spell, so I could kill it with three, but what happens if eight spells are needed?
Escape goat seems to be becoming a demon I’m worried about.

When I use Durandal, I can kill an escape goat with one [Rush].
NT Ant can be killed as well with a single [Rush].
Usually Durandal would require a second swing.
Should I use [Rush] on NT Ant’s to prevent being poisoned?

I use Durandal since I want to recover some MP, though if I’m attacking with [Rush] then I’m using MP so I’m probably not getting anywhere.
However, I’m probably absorbing MP while using [Rush].
[Rush]’s MP efficiency isn’t good, but it can’t be helped.
Whenever I take out Durandal on the tenth floor, I’ll use the warrior job.

After leaving the Labyrinth, now that I have a mirror, I go to the territory of the Harz Duchy on my own.
I shouldn’t take Roxanne and Sherry to the elven paradise of good looking men.
I asked them to do the laundry and prepare breakfast.

Even though I need to sell two items to get the 30% bonus, I can’t do that this time.

It would be a total loss if I can't sell it.
I don't think this first one is just a trial.

I went to a room in Miyagi that had been used for disaster relief.
It's a room like a lobby, that the adventurers used for [Field Walk], so it should be fine.

"I'd like to speak to the knight leader, Gozer."

I pass the knight's emblem to a knight inside.
He confirms both sides of it.

"May I have your name?"
"My name is Michio. If you tell him I'm an adventurer from the flood relief then he'll know who I am."
"Please wait here for a moment."

The knight enters the interior of the castle.
Everything went smoothly because of the emblem.

I waited in the lobby.
It's a really bright room.
The side window is wide open, and light is coming in.

When I came previously, everything was closed up.
It was during the flood relief, so it was probably raining outside.

The sun is high in Quratar.
The sun isn't that high here yet.
I heard that this was to the north, but maybe it's to the east?

"Oh. It's the adventurer after all?"

I hear a voice as I look through the window.
This voice isn't Gozer?

When I turn around, the Duke of Harz is standing there.
He has a smile that seems like it's shining.
Why can't the elves die from a curse?
Leaving Sherry & Roxanne behind was the correct answer.

“Gozer isn’t here?”
“Gozer is at the training school currently. We can talk instead. Come with me.”

The Duke turned quickly, and left the lobby.
He’s as impatient as last time.
You’d think he’d act a bit more noble.
It probably doesn’t matter what he does, since he’s good looking.

“I thought it would be a good time to come after the sun had risen, but was I mistaken?”
“There’s no problem. In this season we are awake as soon as there is light.”
“Ah.”

I see.
The season is different in the north.
The sunrise is early, so they are going from spring to summer.
If this was the arctic, they’d still have sun at midnight.
Since this is north of Quratar, does the sun rise earlier here?

“The hardship is over. The rain has stopped, and the water level has decreased. There isn’t any more worry about floods.”
“That’s good to hear.”

The Duke opened a door, and entered a room.
It’s the small office I was in before.

“Sit. So, what are you here for?”
“The other day I met lord Gozer in Quratar’s merchant’s guild.”
“Ah, that time.”

The duke sits in his chair.
I put the mirror on the duke’s desk.

“I hear that a mirror from Palmasque might be useful as a present.”

I unwrap the mirror from the papyrus it’s in.
It’s scary showing it to the duke instead of Gozer.
Even though I’m grateful.

“It’s quite nice, but the decoration doesn’t fit in.”
“Ah, you have some nice wood in your territory don’t you?”
“Yes, do you need some for something?”

I’ve thought of something.
Since I saw the forest outside the window, I’m going with it.
There might be a wood processing industry here if they have a forest.

“Since it’s a gift, I was thinking you could remove this decoration, and add something from your own territory.”
“Ah, I see.”

The duke picks up a bell from his desk, and rings it.”

“You called?”

When the bell rings, the door opens at once and someone comes it.
Quick, very quick.

“Ah. Please tell Gozer to come.”
“Yes.”

He answers briefly, and leaves.
He gave a compete bow, and never showed me his face.

He might be a personal guard.
It seems odd for someone to appear immediately inside a castle.
Maybe there are guards lurking in the shadows?

“Please speak to Gozer about selling the mirror. I’ll return this emblem to you as well.”

The duke puts the emblem on the desk.
I accept it, and sit down on the sofa to wait for Gozer.

Eventually, there’s a knock, and Gozer enters the room.

“Excuse me for taking so long. Oh, it’s the adventurer.”
“He seems to be called Michio.”

I should have introduced myself to the duke, but instead gave my name to the receptionist first.

“Michio.”
“He’s come with a mirror from Palmasque.”
“Oh.”

Gozer looks at the mirror on the desk.

“The frame is a bit dull.”
“That’s true.”
“But the rest isn’t bad.”

The duke and Gozer talk about the mirror.
Gozer turns towards me.

“It’s hard to get something like this isn’t it?”
“It’s not too hard if you buy it from Palmasque.”
“Did you go to Palmasque?”

Did I make a mistake?

“…yes.”
“I see. You must be a truly excellent adventurer. This is more than I expected.”

The duke’s misunderstandings are getting bigger.

“There are no knights who can go from Bode to Palmasque in our order of knights.”
“Well, it wasn’t easy.”

I’m not sure if I can go from Bode to Palmasque either.
I hope they don’t think of me too highly.

“I’ll pass this to a tradesman to experiment a bit with making a frame. I’ll need another ten, can you get them?”
“I can, but not all at once.”
“It can be over several days.”
“That’s fine then.”

It should be alright, as long as they have enough on hand in Palmasque.

“I’d like a bit of variation in the size. What is the price?”

The price?
It’s around three times more if you buy them at the Imperial capital.
It was 35 silver coins, so triple that is 10,500nars.

Should I be bold, and overcharge?
Is that too high?

If the order of knights were determined, they could buy the mirrors themselves.
With a party of six taking turns using [field walk], they could probably make it to Palmasque.
If it was difficult, they could just stay one night in Palmasque.

The cost of one person for a day in Palmasque is 1,000 nars. If all six spend the night in Palmasque, then it’s an extra 2,000 each added to the cost of a mirror if they all take one.
The total cost of a mirror would be 5,500 nars.

If the cost of the adventurer is 500 nars a day, that’s another 1000 nars added to each mirror.
If I can make the round trip in a day it’s only 500 nars though.
I can’t be fussy, I shouldn’t overcharge.

“Well…”
“Hmm, for this size, how about I give you 12,000, no… I’ll make it 13,000 nars. What do you think?”

As I worry about it, Gozer suggests a price.

“That seems a bit expensive.”
“You’re probably thinking of prices in the Imperial Capital. It costs extra to get to the Imperial Capital from here.”
“If you organized a group of adventurers to go to Palmasque, couldn’t you get them for half that price?”
“It’s hard to hire people. It’s not something that’s needed every day. Since it’s a one of a kind event, a little extra cost is unavoidable.”

This is the opinion of the leader of Harz duchy's order of knights?
They employ people long term, instead of on a short mission basis.
Even if there is no work, they have to look after their employees.
Employing an adventurer seems to be cheap at first, but it isn't if you consider the long term.

Oh, I was invited to the order of knights as an adventurer too.

"Then, I will get them for 10,000 nars each."
"Are you sure that's alright?"
"Yes."

It's still selling it for triple what I paid, so it's good business.

Chapter 72 - Amber

"If you visit Palmasque often, you should consider selling amber there."
After buying mirror, Gozer advises me.

"Amber?"
"Yes. There's quite a demand of amber in Palmasque because it's a jewel. It's small but expensive. However, I have no idea about the price prevailing in Palmasque."
"I see."

I can seemingly double my earnings if I sell something in Palmasque when I go there to buy mirrors.
Definitely.

Because it was translated properly, amber does seem to exist in this world. It can easily be carried by adventurers for commercial purposes, since it's not as bulky and expensive as diamond.

"I'll introduce you to an amber merchant here in Bode. He's reliable. He takes care of almost all of amber dealings in Bode. His store is right next to Bode's Adventurer Guild."
"I'll write a letter of recommendation for you. If you have my letter of recommendation, he won't try selling substandard goods to you."

The duke picks the quill up from the table and starts writing.
He folds the papyrus and drops some wax onto it.
He stamps something on the dropped wax and seals the papyrus.
Is this a letter of recommendation?

I receive the letter of recommendation and leave the room.
I return to the lobby and leave the Imperial palace.

For now, I go back home.
After breakfast, we go to Vale's labyrinth, where from we move to Zabir's labyrinth.
No sweat.
As long as I recover my MP along the way, there's no problem.

“Where are we?”
“It’s a rest stop I established on route to Palmasque. Mino appears on 1st floor here.”

Roxanne asks and I reply casually.

“We are going to Palmasque?”
“We are going to buy same mirror as yesterday. Plain one, no decoration. About ten mirrors.”
“Ten?”
“I don’t mean all ten at once. We will carry one at a time.”

Mirror is fragile and its packaging is not strong enough, so it’s difficult to transport.
Even if I can, I shouldn’t carry more than one at the same time.
If it breaks, it’s over.
I can simply make five round trips.

Five round trips?

Will I be going through that experience five times?
If it’s about going, there’s no problem.
The problem is with returning.
Because I’ll have to go home directly, it’ll take all my MP.

I can’t take it.
Because we’ll be carrying mirrors on our way back to home, we can’t go via labyrinth.
It’ll be troublesome if the mirror cracks.

I can laugh it off if it breaks in my hands. But what if it breaks in the hands of my slaves?
They won’t be able to laugh it off.

Having recovered my MP, I take us to Palmasque.

“We’ll be going then.”
“Buy two mirrors. Same size as yesterday. Also, ask them if they want to buy amber.”

I instruct sherry.
She nods and leaves.
Having seen the two off, I go to Bode via labyrinth.
As long as I stop by a labyrinth, there's no problem with covering long distance.
That said, it doesn't change the fact that it's bothersome.

I ask for the location of the adventurer guild at the Imperial palace and head downtown.
The merchant, who deals in amber, is right next to the guild.
After walking for a while on the stone paved street, I finally find the guild.

A square emblem with the insignia of the guild is hanging outside.
The motif looks like land.
Signifying probably that adventurers travel around the world.

Next to the adventurer guild is a building the entrance to which is open.
It must be that amber merchant's store.
I enter the building.

There's no amber anywhere in the store.
Rather than store, it's more of an office.

"Welcome."
"Is this the place that deals in amber?"
"Indeed."

A courteous, cat-eared man comes out.
He looks like a clerk of a cosplay store.
These ears don't look good on him at all.

"There are no elves here?"
"Amber is found near sea which happens to be catkin tribe's territory."

Oops! My ignorance is on display yet again.
There are many things about this world that I don't know and this is one of those things.
Amber is found near sea?
Is it perhaps pearl, not amber?

“I often travel to faraway places, so I’ve decided to sell amber. I heard from the leader of knights about this place.”

I show him the letter of recommendation.

“This… is written by the duke personally!”
“Yes. What about it?”
“There are not many people who receive letter of recommendation personally from the duke. Can you please come inside?”

He takes me to the inner part of the building.
I’m even served herbal tea .
The authority of the duke is unquestionable.

“Well, let’s hear it then.”
“We sell most of our stock in the Imperial capital and its vicinity. If it’s not about that region, and if we can fulfill your order from remainder stock, it would be great. So, what’s your plan?"
“This time, I’m going to Palmasque. Because it’s only an occasional thing at this point, not regular, I don’t plan on selling large quantity.”
“If you plan on selling small quantity in such a distant place as Palmasque, I have no issue.”

The merchant leaves the room and comes back with a small wooden box.

He puts the box on the table.
Inside the box was a transparent gemstone tinged with amber.

It’s amber.
It’s not pearl.

“Wonderful.”
“A small amber gemstone costs several thousand Nar. An amber necklace costs tens of thousands of Nar. The price of this one is 55,000 Nar. Big ones are quite rare.”

The merchant passes a necklace to me.
There were about ten oval-cut amber gemstones in the necklace.

Can something like this be found in modern Japan?
Or is this a little old-fashioned?
I have not much idea about jewellery.

“Hmm…”
“Palmasque is a town famous for its arts and crafts. You might want to sell raw gemstones there.”

Because I returned the necklace immediately, he thinks that I’m not interested in it.

“That’s right. I think raw gemstones will be better.”
“Raw gemstones are not available right now. I’ll have them prepared by your next visit.”
“I’m going to Palmasque to have an idea of the demand there. When it’s time to sell, I’ll be in your care.”
“Please look forward to it.”

Before I lose more face, I leave the building and Bode thereafter.
I head to Palmasque via labyrinth.
Although it’s bothersome, it helps me in covering long distance.

Those two were already back and waiting in the adventurer guild.
They seem to have bought two mirrors as asked.

After dropping the mirrors at home, we go to 2nd floor of Quratar’s labyrinth.
I can’t take the risk of facing a group of Spi Spiders again.
Although Spi Spiders are not difficult to deal with, I would most likely get poisoned in my present state of mind.
Having recovered my MP, I take us back home.

Am I going to do it four more times?

“You seem to have bought the right thing.”
“Yes. Also, we can buy ten mirrors for a total of three hundred silver coins.”
“Oh.”

Did you haggle over the price?
Great!
As expected of Sherry.

“But there are no coins left. They asked for the payment of one mirror in advance. I’m sorry.”
“If it’s only that much, there’s no problem.”

Earlier, I gave Sherry ninety silver coins. They bought two mirrors and paid for one in advance which means one mirror costed thirty silver coins.
So the discount is effective immediately.
Sherry is really good at thinking.
Because we are buying large quantity, it’ll be a little cheaper.

“As for the size, they have agreed for both large and small alternately.”
“That’s great.”
“About amber, they said they would like to buy raw amber. We can sell raw gemstones to the workshops that use jewels for decoration.”

Raw amber?
So the merchant was right when he suggested so.
Earlier, I wasn’t sure when I asked Sherry to inquire about amber but it turned out to be right decision.

To reward them for their hard work, I have them take bath.
I enter as well, of course, to give them full service.

The day after next, I take both Roxanne and Sherry with me to Bode.
However, I carry the mirrors to the Imperial palace by myself.
Two mirrors in two days.
I didn’t try to sell more than one at a time because Gozer’s job is Grand Wizard, so he doesn’t have Calc skill.

10,000 Nar for one mirror is enough as is.
Also, I can’t carry more than one mirrors alone. I can ask Roxanne but I don’t want her to see good looking men.
Today, I have them accompany me because I’ll be buying amber this time.

“Oh, welcome. I’ve been waiting for you.”

When we enter the building, the catman merchant welcomes me.
He doesn't look pretty by even one millimeter, but there's a strangely warm feeling.
Courtesy, politeness and cat-ears match quite well.
But this appearance may be deceiving.

"There seems to be demand of amber in Palmasque after all."
"Is that so? I have prepared something for you. Come with me, please."

He takes us to the inner part of the building.
A catgirl brings four cups of herbal tea.
Catgirls are so pretty.

Roxanne and Sherry seem to be treated well too.
I sip some tea.
Meanwhile, the merchant puts a large wooden box on the table.

"Wow!"

Voices come over from both sides of mine.
From Roxanne and Sherry.
They like jewels after all.

"So, do you like it?"

Availing the opportunity, the merchant quickly interjects.
As you would expect from a merchant.
He's shrewd.

"N-No…"
"You can have a look at least."
"Okay, we'll take a look."

Because they were being hesitant, I press the two on.
Roxanne and Sherry pick amber up in their hands.

"So, this is raw gemstone?"

Instead of amber, there was a reddish stone in the box.
But it can't be a stone, it has to be amber.
The merchant picks one up, and passes it to me.

"It may appear to be but it's not completely raw. It's slightly refined. Its quality is difficult to assess."
"I see."
"Do you know what kind of amber is considered best?"
"I'm afraid I don't."

I can't possibly know.
Even if I knew about amber of earth, which I don't, it's not necessarily same in this world.

"Highly transparent with a tinge of red is considered best. It needs refining of raw gemstone to some extent."
"Is that so?"
"The more the amber is refined, the more it's subjected to foreign substances. Amber is believed to be formed by the insects that were driven off by the magic of the goddess. You'll find many insects near the area where amber is mined. One with an insect inside is extremely rare and equally expensive. But it's difficult to tell from a completely unrefined gemstone."

Amber is fossilized tree resin.
But it's different in this world.
There was something I didn't understand, so I ask Sherry.

"The magic of the goddess?"
"Because it has the magic of the goddess, dwarves tried to make equipment that could utilize the magic contained in it but there was no success. Scholars, who tried to extract the magic of the goddess from it, failed just as well."

So, it was all in vain.

"Really?"
"But the great scholar of the past and few others claimed that they extracted the magic of the goddess by rubbing the gemstones together."

It was most probably static electricity.
I turn to the merchant and return the gemstone to him.

“It seems difficult to assess the quality of an unrefined gemstone.”
“Yes, it’s impossible if you don’t have experience of several years in this field. For now, this is the only stock remaining. 800 Nar for one gemstone of same size and quality. I can provide you with twenty in total.”

800 Nar may seem cheap but it’s not, considering it’s essentially a stone.
Refined one costs several thousand Nar.
But it’s understandable if you take all the hassle into account, don’t you think?

“Oh well, the duke recommended you after all. I’ll buy all of it.”

I don’t know how it’ll turn out but i’ll buy it all.
I have already earned enough profit from selling three mirrors to the duke.
If the cost of failure surpasses my limit, I’ll just drop the idea.

Roxanne and Sherry are still absorbed in amber, even though I was finished talking with the merchant.
It was unnecessary to bring them here, for they seem inexperienced in this regard.
Or are they that surprised after seeing amber?
Roxanne is staring fixedly at the necklace.
I visualize the necklace on her chest.

Damn!
Mind blowing.
I imagine the necklace sitting on her chest and appreciate the image from the bottom my heart.

I want to rub it.
I want to squeeze it.
I want to carry her to the bed.

There’s no other choice. I have to buy it.
Roxanne will be pleased as well if I buy it.

Do I really have no choice but to buy it?

No, wait.
Don't be rash.
It's a trap of the amber merchant.
Yeah, it must be.

I avert my eyes.
My gaze falls upon Sherry. She's having a staring contest with Roxanne.
She has a grin on her face.
She doesn't look like the Sherry I know.

"I wonder if this one will look good on you."

The merchant brings another necklace.
It's dark red in color and comparatively larger.
Sherry tries it on.
Right after appears a gleam on her face.

"Wow!"
"Indeed."

Indeed.
The necklace shines gorgeously on Sherry's chest.
It really looks outstanding.

"B-But… I-I don't…"

Although Sherry likes it, she tries to decline.

"This necklace with dark red amber is priced at 45,000 Nar. The other one is for 30,000 Nar."

The merchant interjects.
It's surely worth the price but I feel disgusted.

It's really unfortunate.
Does it mean Roxanne's necklace is cheaper than Sherry's?
Even when she's the number one slave?

Is there no escape?
What if I don't buy?
Damn it! The amber merchant showed the more expensive one to Sherry.

"I see."
"And I recommend this one for the lady over there."

When I was pondering over it, the merchant brings another necklace.
He puts it in front of Roxanne.

"Oh."
"Although its color is faint due to high degree of refining, it's one of the few necklaces our firm takes pride in."

It's highly transparent with a tinge of amber.
There's a big jewel in the centre with several smaller ones lined up on both sides.

"How much for this one?"

I ask the merchant while Roxanne tries it on.
There are three mounds on her chest now.
The amber mound is in the centre.
On each side of the amber mound is a big mound.

Because it has faint color, it doesn't assert itself too much.
It's sitting quietly on Roxanne's chest.
Sitting on two surrounding mounds.

Don't you be kidding me!
This means war!
I can do nothing but watch while it's sitting on her chest.
This is war!

"I-It looks good on you."
"Thank you."

Her smiling face looks so dazzling.

“Do you like it?”
“It surely looks better than the previous one.”
“This one is priced at 50,000 Nar.”

It’s 5,000 Nar more than Sherry’s.
In other words, my escape.

Chapter 73 - Limit

I pay 77,700 Nar and leave the store.
Woah!
It was a special service due to the duke's personal recommendation.
It wasn't just 30% discount.
Oh well, it can't be helped.
Although I don't know what can't be helped, it can't be helped.
From Bode's Adventurer Guild, I go to Zabir's labyrinth via Vale's.
In a small room in the labyrinth, I put the necklace around Roxanne's neck.

I'm getting excited from the top view of her chest.
The amber makes the view more captivating.
I was right to buy it.

"Thank you, master. But is it alright?"
"It's alright. Actually, you two will be selling amber in Palmasque, so it's mandatory that you have it on yourself. It's business expense."

Although I had no such intention, it's true now that I think about it.
It's a sort of exhibition.
A saleswoman who sells amber wears amber.

"Okay, then I'll borrow it from you."
"Borrow?"

Says Sherry while I was putting the necklace around her neck, so I ask.

"Everything that an owner buys for slaves is the owner's property. Well, aside from consumables, undergarments and other items of daily use."

Sherry answers.
Is it really so?
Even if I buy equipment for these two, it'll belong to me?

"I see."

I put the necklace around Sherry's neck.

“Thank you.”
“The cost will be recovered anyway if you two sell raw amber. Even if you fail, I’ll recover the cost somehow.”

I have already sold three mirrors to the duke.
Isn’t it possible to sell some amber as well?
Because amber is easier to carry than mirror, it shouldn’t be as expensive as mirror.

Mirror and amber can’t be kept in Item Box, for they’re not items dropped by monsters, nor they’re used as materials in making equipment.
Amber, however, is just a small stone.
You can easily carry some in your rucksack.

Sherry is carrying sixty silver coins, which includes advance payment of one mirror, and some raw amber gemstones.

“Umm… are you not going with us again?”
“Yes, I’ll have you two go by yourselves.”
“But we have necklaces this time.”

These two combined have more than 100,000 Nar on them.
Amber can be sold for high in Palmasque.
So, there’s a risk of misappropriation.

However, they won’t be able to do it when they’re in custody of such expensive accessory as necklace.

“It’s alright. I trust you two.”
“Thank you.”

After handing one silver coin each to the two in respect of entry toll, I Warp us to Palmasque.
Paying toll every time is so wasteful.
Next time, should I Warp to some other building?
Or will it be a bad idea?

After seeing them off, I go to the labyrinth and then come back to pick them up.
The two were already back with mirrors.

We return home and then go to the labyrinth to recover MP.
I have to do it three more times.

“We have sold all amber gemstones at forty silver coins apiece.”
“That’s great.”

It’s five times the cost.
It’s more than I expected.
It’s more than the total amount I paid to the amber merchant.
So, the cost of the necklaces has already been recovered.

I could make more profit with my 30% bonus.
No, I don’t have to be so greedy.
And there’s no guarantee that 30% bonus would work there.

“However, the owner said it was only this once due to Roxanne-san’s necklace. I’m afraid the price won’t be this high next time.”
“Is that so?”

Did she deal directly with the owner?
Because I told them to go to the workshop to buy plain mirror, they went to the owner of the workshop, it seems.
My 30% bonus wouldn’t have worked on him.
But what was that about Roxanne’s necklace?

“…He should just cease to exist.”

Sherry curses.

I-I think I get it.
Was the owner a man?
He was definitely ogling Roxanne’s ‘necklace.’

Damn him!
He dares lay his eyes on my Roxanne?

“He must perish.”
“I should just sell a necklace to his wife for twenty five gold coins. That will be his punishment.”

The owner has wife?
Yet he directed his filthy gaze to my Roxanne?
There will be punishment indeed.
Oh well, his wife would figure it out anyway when she notices that he bought amber from Roxanne at such a high price.

“Sherry, you did well.”
“Thank you. Also, we bought mirrors at discounted price of twenty silver coins. Therefore, we have already paid for two mirrors in advance.”

Earlier, I gave her sixty silver coins — thirty for one mirror and thirty deposit.
But this time they were charged only twenty silver coins.
Although they paid all sixty silver coins, they have paid deposit for two mirrors.

“The price dropped too much.”
“It’s better if the workshop of such an owner doesn’t make profit. His wife doesn’t know much about sales, so she couldn’t lower it anymore. This was the lowest price we could get.”
“I-I see.”

It’s already two-third.
Merciless.

“He wasn’t lowering the price, of course, so we talked to his wife. We have extinguished the evil.”

So, the owner first incurred loss when he bought amber and was then exposed to his wife as well.
Even if they hadn’t exposed him, his wife would have found out that he bought amber from Roxanne at such a high price.
Sherry is so ruthless.

“The world is a beautiful place, evil can’t be allowed to flourish here.”
“Yes. Oh, we received eight gold coins in total. Here, umm…”
“Alright.”

Sherry can calculate if she tries to but she doesn’t have confidence. Twenty amber gemstones at forty silver coins apiece will be eight gold coins.

She nods reassuredly, opens her Item Box and takes the coins out.
I open my Item Box as well, receive the coins and put them in.

As for gold coins, we have a total of twenty one now.
And we can also sell a necklace to that owner's wife.
When I'm done selling mirrors to Gozer, I'll have enough money to go to the Imperial capital and visit the slave merchant.

We make earnings mainly out of labyrinth.
But to make earnings out of labyrinth is really as profitable?
Shouldn't I just switch to trading?

It's thanks to leveling up in labyrinth, however, that I can go to Palmasque in the first place.
I wouldn't have been able to Warp to as far as Palmasque, had I not started at Vale's labyrinth back then.
And I need money for mirrors and amber.
I won't be able to buy, if I don't earn some money from labyrinth first.

Also, the amber merchant isn't doing that great either. I find that out when I visit the store two days later.

"Because you didn't give us any estimate last time, I wasn't able to prepare it beforehand."

The catman merchant apologizes.
Large quantity of amber is seemingly not easy to arrange.

It's not? Really?
If he allows someone to sell large quantity of amber, won't he allow a competitor to enter the market?
The amber merchant can employ an adventurer to sell in distant areas.
Why he's not doing so is probably because there isn't much supply.

By the same token, the price will shoot up in distant areas if there isn't much supply.

"I see."
"Amber is washed ashore after storm. It may be available if there's a storm soon."

I want to sell a necklace to the workshop owner's wife but it doesn't seem to be available.
If I buy more than one, 30% discount will be effective as well.

"If you say so. By the way, is it available in Talem or Tamel or whatever the name is?"
"It's Talem. It's famous for woodworks. Because it's used in decoration, it can be found there. Actually, we don't cater that area for this reason."

It's the same place where the duke is getting the mirrors decorated.
So, it's renowned for woodworks?
If it's renowned, there must be Japanese cypress, teak or mahogany trees in that area.

"Could you please have wooden cases for necklaces prepared from Talem for me?

The necklaces I bought from here earlier were in cloth bag.
In Japan, they come in cases.
Apparently, there's no such practice in this world.

"Wooden cases?"
"An amber necklace is a high-class item. A case made in Talem will only add to its class."
"I see. You're certainly correct. But why are you asking us?"

The amber merchant becomes restless.
After all, I'll become reputed if I'm the only one selling necklaces in cases.

"Well, if I'm the only one who sells necklaces in cases, I'll gain reputation and it'll be only a matter of time before others copy me. Besides, I'm from a faraway place. I'd rather have a local resident deal with matters in Talem."
"You'll sell necklaces in cases?"
"I'm selling it to someone far off, not here, so be at ease."

Nearby area is his target market.

"Do you mind if we sell in cases too?"
"I don't mind."

“Very well. I’ll have you take a look as soon as it arrives. Do tell us what you think then.”

Raw amber gemstones were not available, so I place the order for cases and leave.
An expensive necklace in a cheap cloth bag is indeed a sad sight to see.
It’s better for it to be in a case.

Those two have put on the necklaces only twice so far.
It’s not something they can put on in labyrinth.
First, when they went to Palmasque.
Second, on the same night.

Pink and white camisoles looked so alluring together with the necklaces.
The big amber of Roxanne’s necklace jutting out of her chest.
The crimson amber of Sherry’s necklace shining gorgeously on her modest chest.

It was the best delicacy till date, I must say.
Delicious!

“The owner’s wife said she’s looking for a good necklace.”

I went back home, gave them the necklaces for a third time and took the two to Palmasque.
They bought two more mirrors. Two more mirrors to sell to the duke.
Two more round trips left.

That night, we reached the boss room on 10th floor of Vale’s labyrinth.
Exploration of labyrinths is progressing smoothly.

“Should we hunt monsters on 11th floor or call it a day?”

Because it’s about time to end exploration for the day, we’ll have not much time for 11th floor.
The boss ant of 10th floor was strong but it wasn’t a match for Roxanne.

“The monster native to 11th floor of Vale’s labyrinth is Spi Spider. We have already faced Spi Spiders in Quratar’s labyrinth but not in Vale’s yet.”

Sherry shares the information.
Monsters that appear from 1st floor to 11th are same for any labyrinth.
Unlike in Quratar's labyrinth, we haven't faced Spi Spiders in Vale's labyrinth because it appears on 11th floor.

"It uses poison."
"Yes, but the chance of getting poisoned is lower compared to NT Ant. We have already fought against them in Quratar's labyrinth, so there shouldn't be any problem."
"So, the chance doesn't increase with level?"
"I haven't heard about it increasing with level. Even if it does, it must be negligible."

We have already fought against them in Quratar's labyrinth.
The advantage of exploring more than one labyrinths is great indeed.
We proceed to 11th floor.

Spi Spider Lv11 collapsed in seven magic attacks.
The number of attacks required has increased by one.
With Durandal, however, it takes two swings or one Rush attack.
Same as 10th floor.

NT Ant Lv11 took four water type magic attacks.
Having faced so many NT Ants, I've reached the point where I can take them out without getting poisoned.
There's little time left.
Should we stop or keep hunting on 11th floor?

Next morning, we cleared 10th floor of Quratar's labyrinth as well.
We had already beaten Pan twice in Vale's labyrinth.
That experience didn't go to waste.

"11th floor of Quratar's labyrinth is considered quite difficult."

Sherry shares the information about 11th floor.

"Really?"
"The monster native to 11th floor of Quratar's labyrinth is Green Caterpillar. It's considered the most difficult of the monsters that appear on first eleven floors. Not only that, NT Ants from 9th floor also appear on 11th floor."

Is Green Caterpillar really that strong?
But it doesn't use poison.

Thread?
Green Caterpillar shoots thread.
The higher the floor, the more the monsters use skills.
It'll be difficult indeed.

If I get stuck in its thread, my movement will be greatly slowed down, increasing my chances of getting poisoned.
It's a deadly combination.

"Such a thing."
"It's possible to dodge the thread."

Yes, it's possible but only for a certain someone of wolfkin tribe.

As expected, it wasn't easy when we started fighting.
But there's no other choice.
Thus, we proceed with the exploration.

Although I have come across quite a few Green Caterpillars Lv11, thread hasn't been shot yet.
Escape Goat Lv11 runs away after getting hit with four magic attacks, so I finish it off after three magic attacks.
Is 11th floor really difficult?

Green Caterpillar shoots thread for the first time on 11th floor.
Furthermore, it's a group of four.

"Here it comes."

Roxanne hops after saying that.
Thread lays scattered there where Roxanne was supposed to be standing.
What the white thread hit was but empty space.
Unsurprisingly, she dodged it.

Because I was at a distance from vanguard, it didn't hit me.
I learned to keep the safe distance from fighting against Needle Woods.

However, if I stay too far, there's an increasing risk of getting attacked from behind by another monster.

Second thread is shot which Roxanne dodges splendidly.
Third attempt was interrupted with the help of Durandal.
Fourth thread catches Sherry.

Sherry is covered in sticky white.
Tens of- no, hundreds of small white threads.
Having slowed Sherry's movement down with the thread, the Green Caterpillar rams into her.

Because I had already shot sixth magic attack, I shoot seventh right after the sixth cools down.
Since the Green Caterpillar can't move, having attacked Sherry, the magic attack hits it.
Two Green Caterpillars and the Escape Goat, which was in the process of running away, were all engulfed in flames.
They collapse, turn into smoke and dissipate.

"Are you alright?"

I ask Sherry while casting Heal.

"Yes. I'm sorry, I couldn't dodge it."
"Don't blame yourself. I can't dodge it either."
"Thank you. I'm fine now."

Sherry stops me when I try to cast Heal on her for sixth time.
Five times is enough?
Is she fully healed now?
I can't cast Plating at the moment.

To take out NT Ants and Escape Goats in one strike of Durandal, Rush skill of Warrior job is necessary.
To select Warrior, I have to remove Alchemist job.
Without Alchemist, I can't cast Plating.

"In worst case scenario, there may be four threads. Can you endure it?"

Sherry nods in confirmation.
Let's say it takes three magic attacks for me to come into contact with it and it shoots thread before I connect finishing strike. She'll have to endure that.
I can also remove Warrior and select Alchemist for Plating but that will only prolong the time to take monsters out.

"I think I can endure it."

If you say so.
Sherry is rational. If she can't, she will clearly say she can't.

But what if it's a close call?
What if the attack is more severe than expected and she can only barely make it out?
Should I tell her to not be reserved with me?
I should not take what Sherry said at its face value.

'I'll try my best' is more appropriate answer than 'I can.'
Safety should be top priority.
As it stands, the difficulty level of 11th floor of Quratar's labyrinth exceeds the normal limit.

Chapter 74 - Cassia

After Quratar's labyrinth, we headed to Vale's labyrinth.
The Green Caterpillar hardly appears on Vale's eleventh floor.
There is a chance of being poisoned because the Spi Spider and NT Ant appear, but some risks are unavoidable.
The danger caused by the increased frequency of magic and poison effects have both increased.

When you enter the labyrinth, there is always risk.
It's not possible to do it with no risk.
There is no guarantee that the green caterpillar won't appear on Vale Labyrinth's eleventh floor.
There was a chance of it appearing on the ninth and tenth floors as well, but I'm not sure if I could endure long enough to cast three spells if I was covered in thread.

Did it appear on the ninth floor?
Maybe I last saw it on the eighth?
Well, that's how common it is.
On Vale Labyrinth's eleventh floor there's nearly no chance of coming across it while hunting.

Well, there's still a chance, so I need to think about counter measures.
If a green caterpillar appears and uses thread, it will be too late to think about it.
The best option would be to increase my magic attack power, and Sherry's defense.

Sherry's leather jacket is pretty much beginner equipment.
We should start by doing something about it.

The wand I'm using is a boss item, but it's a boss item from a low level floor.
It would be good to improve my cane. TN Wand is the item type, Cane is the item category. Like Sherry's Hammer: Club
The the number of spells needed to defeat demons decreases, then the time spent fighting the enemies decreases as well.
If it's one spell less, then fighting time can decrease by a quarter.

Is a fight still hard if it's just three quarters of the original time?
Or does it need to be just half the time?
I'll have to think about it seriously.
Strengthening the wand should be a good idea.

I can also give Sherry a sacrificial misanga.
But sacrificial is a one time effect.
I can't put too much faith in it.
If we are unable to move because of the thread, then surviving one attack won't mean much.

Sacrificial misanga is a piece of equipment that should be used to cover an unexpected blow, and not considered as part of a battle plan.

After leaving the labyrinth, instead of going to the armor shop, I go to Bode.
I deliver my daily mirror.
It's my current daily routine.
I haven't been cooking breakfast lately.

I'm guided to the duke's room, and I exchange the mirror with Gozer for one gold coin.

"You should be used to the castle a bit now. Instead of being guided in you can come to a more direct room."

The duke says this as he sits on the chair.

"Is that alright?"
"It's fine. There are some things happening here."
"The order of knights has become quite busy. A third labyrinth has just been found in our territory. The second labyrinth was only just found the other day and we need to move forward with our exploration immediately."

Gozer added an explanation.
A labyrinth appeared?
It's the lords responsibility to exterminate labyrinths.
It must be serious.

“I see.”
“The number of knights in the castle will decrease. I don’t want to increase any unnecessary duties.”

The number decreases, and a strange adventurer is allowed to wander around?
It should be fine.

“That’s the situation.”
“Ok.”
“The people in the castle are already talking about it.”
“Also, I’d like to make a request of you Michio. Your assistance in exploring the Labyrinth would be a help to us.”

It’s the duke’s request.
Is my help alright?
It will seem strange if I get embarrassed.
Should we fight together?

“Ah, it’s alright if you just enter it.”
“That’s enough?”
“You can bring your own party as well Michio, we don’t mind.”

I just have to enter it?
That reminds me, Gozer saw Sherry and Roxanne at the merchants guild.
It will be a nuisance if it’s too difficult, but there’s no problem if I just have to enter it.

“You aren’t contracted to a town, or order of knights are you?”

The duke asks a question.

I see.
An adventurer might not be completely available.
Many people are restricted by territorial boundaries or relationships.
Maybe they can’t invite someone from another order of knights?

“There’s no problem if I go to the labyrinth here for the foreseeable future.”

This way I don't deny any connection with a hometown either.
He'd be likely to go after me more forcefully if he knew I was completely free.

"It's reassuring to have an excellent adventurer enter the labyrinth."
"I can only handle the lower levels, but I should be able to explore."

I need to set things straight.

"That's fine. Just having you enter will be useful, Michio."

I don't understand.
Is that right?
Shouldn't Gozer handle this?

"Ok, do I need to know anything about entering the labyrinth?"
"You can enter wherever you want. Just show the emblem you have to the member of the order of knights watching the labyrinth, and he will take you to the topmost explored floor for free. There are advantages to newly discovered labyrinths, there's a reward from the knights to the first person to make it to a new floor. The first labyrinth is in Haruba, the second is in Tare, and the third is to the south here in Bode."
"I see."

I don't understand some, but nod anyway.
It would be a problem if "an excellent adventurer" didn't even know basic things.

"Tare is a village that received care packages during the floods. I will organize an adventurer to guide you to Haruba."

They'll take me?
That's good.

"Thank you."
"I'll organize it straight away. You can wait in the lobby Michio, and we'll be there for you soon."

The duke stands up and leaves the room at once.
He's always in a rush.
I just need to head to the lobby.

"Well, I'll be going then."

I bid farewell to Gozer, and head to the lobby.

The duke comes while I'm waiting in the lobby.
He's with two good looking men, and three beautiful women.
Elves.
One of the women is stunningly beautiful.

Her beauty can be mistaken for the brilliance of the sun.
White skin, bright golden hair, pink lips, and large faintly colored eyes.
It's a woman that reminds me of a large rose in full bloom in the middle of a bouquet.

All elves are beautiful, but she's another step above that.
No, maybe two steps.
The highest possible.

"This is my wife, Cassia."

The duke introduced the beautiful woman.

His wife… so that's it…

"I'm Cassia."

Cassia steps forward and says hello.
Even a greeting is elegant when a beautiful woman does it.
It's different from the feeling Roxanne gives off, but both are feelings of perfection.
It's like comparing a Greek sculpture to a French doll.

Could I have such a beautiful woman as my wife if I was a good looking man?
Or is it because he's the duke.
I am envious.

The social class system.
The difference in social standing.
It's very unequal.

Is this exploitation allowed?
Is this atrocity allowed?
Is this unjustness allowed?

It's unfair.
It's absurd.
We need a revolution.

The rulers should tremble in fear.
The working class has nothing to lose.
They can take the world.
Workers of all nations, unite!
(From: The Communist Manifesto)
TN: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Communist_Manifesto
"Nice to meet you, I'm Michio."

However, I bow my head to Cassia.
You must behave as a gentleman in front of a lady.

"I've heard good things about you from the duke."

Cassia shares her words with me.
The duke seems to have talked about me.

The duke is a good person.
Maybe we don't need a revolution.

Cassia|Female|29 years old.
Wizard Lv41
Equipment: Staff of Offerings|Waterproof Tiara|Fireproof Robe|Windproof Gloves|Earthproof Loafers|Sacrificial Misanga

Oh? The duchess fights as well?
Waterproof, Fireproof, Windproof, Earthproof. The four elements.
This is duchess class equipment?

“You enter the labyrinth as well duchess?”
“It is my duty.”

She gives a graceful nod.
The duchess who takes the lead and fights for the people.
With this, there is no chance for a revolution.

“First, four of us will go to Haruba, Michio, Cassia, Klaus, and myself.”

The duke declared.
They have a party of six, so they need two round trips to include me.
It’s bad.

These six might be the duke’s party.
Holy Knight, Knight, Wizard, Shrine maiden, Explorer, Adventurer.
Since they have a Shrine maiden for recovery, and a Wizard, it’s a balanced party.
The Adventurer is their only transport.

The adventurer forms the party.
I prepare as I wait.

“Here it comes.”

I’m the last one in the duke’s party, and the Adventurer faces the wall.
This is a chance.

Holy Knight Lv14, Knight Lv50, Warrior Lv30, Villager Lv6, Wizard Lv1, Explorer Lv1, Swordsman Lv1, Forest Ranger Lv1, Herbalist Lv1.

I used [Party job settings].
I look at the duke’s job.
I’m not familiar with it yet, because I’ve never seen anyone use it.

If I guess, the order is Warrior Lv30 –> Knight Lv50 –> Holy Knight?
Forest Ranger, probably the elves racial job.
Even the other elves have it.

Did he pick up a leaf to get Herbalist?
He's always being hasty.
I can picture him grabbing items before even getting a chance to see them.

The duke follows the adventurer into the wall.
Next, is Cassia.
I entered last.

By the way, since I can use [Party job settings], it's also possible for me to change the duke's job.
To Herbalist Lv1.

Ahahahahahaaaa.
The duke might enter the labyrinth after this.
It won't be the first floor.
What would it be like to be a Herbalist Lv1 against the stronger demons on the upper floors?

Ahahahahahaaaaa
Cassia would become a widow.

No, I won't do it.
I won't do it.
I probably won't do it.

When we arrived at Haruba, the adventurer dissolved the party, and went back.
This is Haruba? It's in the forest somewhere.
The entrance to the labyrinth is nearby.

"Did someone get past the 41st floor yet?"
"Not yet."

The duke talks to the Explorer at the entrance.
Currently the labyrinth exploration goes up to the 41st floor.

If the entrance has appeared, the labyrinth has more than 50 floors.
How long will it take to exterminate the labyrinth?
It will be difficult if they have two more labyrinths to worry about.

It's possible for me to go up to the 41st floor for free if I show the emblem.
Should I do it now?
This labyrinth might be defeated by the time I can get to the 41st floor.

"Well, I'll be going on ahead."
"I look forward to your continued support."
"Thank you."

I bid farewell to the duke and Cassia, and I enter the labyrinth.
I don't want to be with them any longer.
As soon as I appear in the small room on the first floor, I go home.

While having breakfast, I talk to Roxanne and Sherry about the labyrinth.

"I will enter three labyrinths in the Harz territory. I won't be going to Vale or Quratar's labyrinths."
"I understand."
"Do you know the location of the labyrinths? I can ask about them in the explorers guild."
"Bode, Haruba, and Tare."

I informed Sherry.

"Bode, Haruba, and Tare. I've got it."
"I have some questions. What's a reward for passing a new floor?"
"In the case of an explorer managed labyrinth, when you defeat the boss and then take the explorer to a new floor, you'll be paid money."

Oh.
There's a reward?
The explorer at the entrance can only take you somewhere he's been before.

He'll pay you money if you take him to a new floor.
He gets money from other people, and takes them to the new floor.
It works well.

"Oh, Zabir's labyrinth wasn't managed. Some labyrinths aren't managed?"
"All labyrinths in the empires territory are managed. Labyrinths outside

any territory aren't managed. Zabir is on the frontier, so it might not be managed."

Is the labyrinth at Zabir outside the territory of the empire?
Is it in the territory of Palmasque?
Palmasque won't manage it?
Oh well.

"I see. Thank you. Also, I was told that I would be useful, even if I'm not exploring at the highest level. Is that true?"
"Um, oh, yes."

Sherry has a strange look for a second.
She isn't sure?

"How so?"
"The labyrinth prey's on people. They'll become highly active if people don't enter them. The activity decreases if lots of people go in. The labyrinth is less dangerous if more people go in.
"What?"
"For example, the labyrinths near the city and village don't have many demons outside them. And the few that are there are weak, and not aggressive. Labyrinths that are secluded will have stronger, more aggressive demons outside them."

Labyrinths have a difference like that?
If you think about it, the duke put me in the labyrinth as food.

Chapter 75 - The Duchy's Labyrinths

"We will visit the armor shop first. After that, Sherry will do some research in the explorer guild while Roxanne and I will go to have a look at Bode's and Tare's labyrinths."
I let them know today's plan at the end of breakfast.
Although we will not be visiting Quratar's labyrinth for the time being, we should still upgrade our equipment.

I have no complaint with the duke for sending me to the labyrinth as a bait, since the duke will be entering the labyrinth himself which makes him as much of a bait.
That's the law of this world.
If I'm strong and careful, I will not become a bait.
If I were to become a bait, I was just not strong enough.

No, strength isn't the only requisite.
I have to analyze myself, my party members and my opponent, and then find out the areas that need to be worked on.
Without superhuman strength, it's not impossible to survive in a labyrinth.

"To upgrade equipment?"
"I intend to replace Roxanne's and Sherry's leather jackets with something better."

And my focus for today is Sherry's leather jacket.
Sherry's equipment need to be upgraded but that does not mean that only her equipment need to be upgraded.
Roxanne's need to be upgraded just as well.
For 30% discount will be effective if I buy more than one.

"Master should upgrade his equipment first."
"My equipment is not the best, I agree, there's room for improvement. But for now, I'm doing only that which is necessary to clear 11th floor of Quratar's labyrinth."

I try to convince Roxanne.
I am a rearguard, so I'm not as exposed to attacks. And if needs be, I have HP Absorption skill of Durandal.

“Umm… I’m sorry that you have to do this for me.”
“Don’t sweat it. Every party member has a role. It’s only logical to increase a vanguard’s defense.”

I tell Sherry to not worry about it.

“Yes, thank you.”
“Understood.”

After breakfast, Roxanne starts doing dishes while Sherry makes more equipment.
Sherry is not just helpful in labyrinth, she’s a Master Smith as well.
Later on, we head to the armor shop.

“So, what’s next after leather jacket? Hard leather jacket?

I ask the man at counter who has become an acquaintance as of late.
It’s a big armor shop which is situated in the heart of Quratar.
The equipment which Sherry makes, I sell here in bulk.

“For a vanguard, there’s chainmail. Chainmail is equal in defense to hard leather but it slows the movement down. It is, however, cheaper than hard leather.”

The man at counter answers.
Opposite to the shelf that has hard leather jackets, is the shelf that has chainmails.
‘Chainmail,’ in other words chainmail. (TN: It’s to tell Japanese people the meaning of english word ‘chainmail.’)

It’s pretty heavy.
Can you run around in a labyrinth wearing this?
Not possible.
Heavy armor is not suited in particular to Roxanne who relies on dodging.

“Roxanne, is hard leather jacket good for you?”
“It is certainly good. But are you fine with it?”
“It’s fine.”

Because our current equipment is the most basic, we should not sweat over such a small upgrade as this.

“Sherry, are you fine with hard leather jacket?”
“I don’t think it will make any difference to me whether the armor is light or heavy.”

Sherry picks a chainmail up.
She wants chainmail?
She handles it with ease.

“Isn’t it heavy?”
“It’s heavy but not that much.”

Well, if Sherry says so.
Dwarves seem to be inherently strong.
Is it perhaps some characteristic effect?

Hard Leather Jacket | Body Equipment
Skills: Empty | Empty

Chainmail | Body Equipment
Skill: Empty

I take a look look at other chainmails. One skill slot seems to be the limit.
Hard leather jackets, on the other hand, have two skill slots.
Hard leather jacket appears to be better equipment.
But the chainmails here are too few. Who knows if there’s one with two skill slots somewhere?

“Alright then, choose one of these.”

I pick more equipment with empty skill slots and pass to Roxanne and Sherry.
Well, it’s not like they can tell the difference.
Still, Roxanne likes to choose things carefully, so I’ll not take that away from her.

While those two were deciding on which one to go with, I take a look around at other equipment.

Hard leather cap and hard leather gloves have two skill slots as well.
I wonder if all hard leather equipment have two empty skill slots.
There's a hard leather headband with one skill slot.

Should I work on improving this area?
Nah, I'm good for now.
After much deliberation, Roxanne and Sherry choose their equipment.

I buy the equipment at 30% discount and leave the shop.
I bid farewell to two gold coins.
The better the equipment, the more expensive it is.

Roxanne and Sherry don their new armors upon arriving at home.
In chainmail, Sherry looks all ready for battlefield.
It's an armor designed to cover the body entirely, so it does not highlight her chest.

Even her clothes underneath are barely visible through it.
It may be colorful but it's surely not sexy.
It may look sexy if she puts it on naked body but that's not possible.

It's metal after all.
Is it not possible to somehow do it for a short while?
I won't ask for it in labyrinth, of course. We can't afford to have her do such a thing there.

"Can't leather jacket be worn over chainmail?"
"Magic is a constituent of an equipment. This is the reason why an equipment can fit perfectly on different body sizes. If you equip two items on the same body part, the magic of both will come in conflict. Consequently, both the equipment will break."

Sherry explains.
So, one equipment for a body part is the principle.
Equipping more than one is impossible.

"Is it also not good to have both sword and wand equipped?"
"As long as you don't hold one in each hand, there's no problem. If you equip only one at a time, it's fine."

So, it's alright if I keep switching.
What will I do if Durandal breaks?
I have to be more careful now with switching.

We part with Sherry at Quratar's adventurer guild and head to Bode.
I ask people at the adventurer guild for the location of Bode's labyrinth and leave on foot.

It's bustling here in Bode.
The town appears similar to Vale.
I pass through the crowd and exit the town walls.
Bode town is smaller than Vale.

I move through the woods.
There's still some distance.
After walking for about an hour, I was standing at the entrance to the labyrinth.

"How far has the exploration progressed?"

I ask the explorer at the entrance.

"Because it only just appeared, no one has been able to clear 1st floor. The monster native to 1st floor is Green Caterpillar."

It really seems to have appeared only recently.
Just because I didn't hear about it, that doesn't mean it existed before I started coming here to sell mirrors to the duke.
It was found just the other day.

I enter the labyrinth and move to Tare from the small room past the entrance.
It's the same shack where I brought supplies earlier.
Is it a sort of meeting place?
I exit the shack.

I find some villagers outside.

"Can you please tell us where the labyrinth is?"
"xxxxxxxxxx"

…It doesn't seem to be brahim language.

"I'm sorry. I don't understand their language."

Roxanne doesn't seem to be familiar with their language either.

"xxxxxxxxxx"

One of the villagers calls someone and a man comes over.
He seems to be the head of this village.

The head of the village and the villager, who called him, both are elves.
Both of them are good looking but they fall short in comparison to the duke.
Or perhaps I have just gotten used to seeing good looking men.

"Are you here for the labyrinth?"
"Yes."

The head of the village seems fluent in brahim.
Which reminds me, it was same for the village where I appeared in this world.

"The labyrinth can be found in the southwest of the village. Even though you're from human tribe, you can find it."
"…I get it."
"Do the best you can."

What was that?
Any more than that and it would be considered hostility.
Is this what they meant when they said elves look down upon humans?
Although I didn't receive such treatment from the duke, Cassia, Gozer or the members of the order of knights, it doesn't mean it would be same for the rest of the duchy.

Earlier, I came here as part of disaster relief team.
Back then, we left immediately after delivering the supplies, so there was not much chance to talk.
Southwest huh?

“They were rude.”
“Let’s not talk about it.”
“But they were looking down on master.”
“It can’t be helped now.”

I calm Roxanne down.
But I’m somewhat happy that she’s angry for my sake.
Still, there’s no use getting angry at people who we may not even meet again.

“As expected, master is tolerant. If it were me, I would teach those people a good lesson.”

Just because I didn’t get back to them, I’m tolerant?
We keep walking while I calm Roxanne down.
After a while, we arrive at the entrance to the labyrinth.

“How far has the exploration progressed?”

I ask the explorer at the entrance.
I was a little apprehensive, for the explorer was an elf.

“13th floor.”
“Which monster appears on 13th floor?”
“The monster native to 13th floor is Rub Shrub.”

This explorer is behaving normally.

As for Rub Shrub, I heard about it earlier.
It drops the item which Sherry needs to make the equipment next in order.
Nice timing!

“Can you take me to 13th floor?”

I take the emblem out and show it to him.

“Are you a member of the order of knights?”
“I’m a related party.”

Gozer told me to say that.
The explorer at the entrance is silent.
Huh? 'Related party' is not enough?

"Umm… since you are only two people, why don't you add me to your party? If not, I can only take one person with me."
"I understand."

I see.
Now I get it.
The explorer was waiting to join my party.

Because we are only two people, there will be no problem with adding him to my party.
Actually, there's one more person in my party: Sherry.
If I add him to my party, we can directly jump to 13th floor.
For some reason, If the explorer forms party himself, he can take only person with him.

I add the explorer to my party and enter the labyrinth.
The explorer goes first. Roxanne and I follow behind him.

"This is 13th floor. Unless you intend to go back outside, please remove me from your party."
"Ah, no, we'll be going back."

Although I wanted to say we'll not be going back, I said we'll be going back.
Now that I think about it, we moved directly to 13th floor.
Do I have to visit all the floors separately?
Or all the floors below 13th are included?

I'll have to test it.
We go outside, I remove the explorer from my party and we enter the labyrinth again.
I call for 11th floor in my mind but nothing happens.
I try once more. This time, I call for 1st floor and we are allowed to proceed.

Only 1st and 13th floors seem to be available.
1st floor is probably available by default. Aside from 1st, only floors which have been visited seem to be available.

Without doing anything else, we move from Tare's labyrinth to Quratar's.
After I recover my MP, we leave the labyrinth.

At Quratar's labyrinth, you are required to pay when you enter. But there's no such thing when you leave.
Because they collect money from a lot of people on a daily basis, it's not unusual that they don't remember the face of every person who enters the labyrinth.
We join up with Sherry at the explorer guild.

"Did you find anything at the explorer guild?"
"Haruba's labyrinth has been cleared up to 40th floor. End-of-exploration notification has been issued for lower floors. The exploration of Tare's labyrinth has progressed to 9th floor. End-of-exploration notification for lower floors hasn't been issued yet. There's no information regarding Bode's labyrinth."
"Is it because it has only just been found?"

It will take some time for them to gather information.
It is, of course, impossible for information of a labyrinth found in Bode just yesterday to be available in Quratar's explorer guild today.
And the exploration of Haruba's labyrinth has already progressed to 41st floor? Woah!

"The monster native to 11th floor of Haruba's labyrinth is Mino. Green Caterpillar appears on 4th floor there. I would suggest this labyrinth."

Mino drops hide, which is used in smithery, and it appears on 11th floor.
There's no problem with Green Caterpillar, however, for we have upgraded our equipment.

Should I pay and move directly to 11th floor?
I don't want to sound stingy but shouldn't we start from 1st floor?

It would be efficient to wait for the exploration of Bode's labyrinth to progress past 11th floor.
But if I were to keep exploring 11th floor of Vale's labyrinth, I would go back on my words to the duke.
It's not like he'll find out.

But there's reward if I clear floors of Bode's labyrinth.

“How much is the reward for clearing floors of Bode’s labyrinth?”
“Umm… because it’s a newly found labyrinth, a silver coin per step.”
“That’s too low!”

One silver coin for 1st floor. Eleven silver coins for 11th floor.
It’s more of a change than reward.
I’ll not be going after that.

We should gain experience on 11th floor.
And it’s too bothersome to start from 1st floor.
I have no choice but to spend some money.

Or should I allow excursion to 10th floor?
The strength of monsters should not be vastly different from other labyrinths.
Only difference will be the number of people in the labyrinth which may prolong exploration.

Be it 10th floor or 11th, I’ll have to pay which is wasteful.
It shouldn’t be any different from Quratar’s and Vale’s labyrinth.
Even if there are more people on 11th floor, it won’t be a problem because we have Roxanne.

Well then, our target will be 11th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth.

Chapter 76 - My Battle Prowess

I have Sherry stay at home with Roxanne and leave for Haruba's labyrinth by myself.
I'll be taking them to 11th floor later.
Earlier, after parting with the duke and Cassia, I Warped from Haruba's labyrinth to home just like that, so it'll be awkward to bring Roxanne and Sherry this time.
When I move out of the small room on 1st floor, I find Gozer.
"Oh, Michio-dono. Are you entering the labyrinth?"

He asks immediately upon seeing me.
This timing, albeit coincidence, is perfect.
That's right, I intend to enter Haruba's labyrinth.

Here's the proof that I entered one of the duchy's labyrinths.

However, some people saw me at Tare's and Bode's labyrinths which may lead to inconsistency.
But there's no need to be worried.
For there's no such thing as image capturing or video recording in this world.

"And why might Gozer-dono be in this part of the labyrinth?"

"We have just cleared 41st floor."
"That's great."

Woah!
As I thought, a Grand Wizard Lv61 is in completely different league.
If battle prowess could be measured, his would surely be over one million.

People accompanying Gozer must be his party members.
Is this the party that's representing the order of Harz duchy knights and leading the exploration?
Two Holy Knights, a Monk and a Shamon.
Shamon?

All the members are high level.
The Monk's level in particular exceeds 90.

Because I have Monk job myself, I know it's not an advanced job like Holy Knight or Grand Wizard.

Furthermore, they're all elves.
They're all good looking.
It hurts people like me who are not good looking.

"Are you leaving already?"
"I was here only to get a hang of this labyrinth. I'll be back with my party members."
"I can have a member of my party guide you if you want."

Gozer offers assistance.
Is he really that caring?
He must have a reason to be here on such a low floor as this.
The more I talk to him, the more he looks suspicious.

"Ah, thank you. I'll be moving to 10th or 11th floor."

Although I was thinking so, why wouldn't I accept such an offer?
Even if I'll be exposing the floor I'll be exploring, I can't afford to miss such an opportunity.
I was planning to challenge 11th floor but I'll now be taking on 10th.

"Ah, you're here. Well then, which floor would you like to go to? 10th and 11th?"

An Adventurer and an Explorer appear out of entrance.
The Adventurer asks Gozer.

"Let me confirm first."

The Explorer takes out the map of the labyrinth.
He seems to be confirming something.

"Yes, 10th and 11th floors."
"Please allow him to guide you. Can you add him to your party?"

Asks Gozer.
Is this Adventurer Lv53 a member of Gozer's party?
When I add the Adventurer to my party, the Explorer leaves.

"Just to confirm, forty two silver coins for 42nd floor, right?"

They really seem to have reached 42nd floor.
When I entered the labyrinth, they were probably leaving.
Apparently, It'll work if I put him in my party and call for 42nd floor in my mind.

Our party of two moves to 10th floor.
Adventurers can not use Dungeon Walk.
We proceed to 11th floor and go back outside.

"Thank you very much for guiding me."
"Well then, Michio-dono, take care."

I give my thanks to Gozer as well and leave.
I return home through a tree nearby.

"When we enter the labyrinth, can we choose the floor?"
"Adventurer and Explorer can do it, yes."

I check out Sherry's level. She's Explorer Lv11.
Explorer and Adventurer can choose which floor to enter, it seems.
So, Gozer's actions earlier were not suspicious.

I take Roxanne and Sherry to 10th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

"Let's start with 10th floor."
"Umm… the monster on 10th floor of Haruba's labyrinth is NT Ant."
"Poison huh? Well, we are exploring this labyrinth for the first time, so it's better to start with lower floor. Roxanne, search."
"Understood."

We proceed under Roxanne's guidance.
After all, I can take an NT Ant Lv10 out with three Waterballs.

It's not our first time facing them.
It'll be alright.
Even in it's a group, I can take it out.
Do you think three ants can kill a dinosaur? Nah.

Escape Goat appears as well on 10th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
It seems to be native to 9th floor of this labyrinth.
Escape Goat Lv10 starts running away after three magic attacks.
Same old pattern. Boring.

'I'll chase it, Roxanne-san. You capture it.'
Without saying any such thing, I take it out with three magic attacks.
Nothing seems out of place on 10th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
We can take on 10th floor without any trouble.

I'm itching to test how capable our new equipment are but it's not a good idea to receive an ant's attack for that reason alone.
I won't have them receive attacks intentionally.
When we reach 11th floor, We'll be receiving attacks from Minos anyway.

"We seem to be doing fine on 10th floor. Let's move on to 11th?"
"Okay."

We proceed to 11th floor.
To take a Mino Lv11 out, seven magic attacks are required.
Because battles will be long, Sherry will receive an attack sooner or later.

Although I was thinking so, I was the first to receive an attack in Haruba's labyrinth.
While I was recovering my MP through Durandal, I couldn't avoid the incoming attack and received Mino's ram with my body.
It was my first time tasting it.
I was made to look like a fool.

It's quicker to take out NT Ants and Escape Goats.
Seven magic attacks are required in total while four are required to come in close contact.
Mino is the main monster of 11th floor but that doesn't mean there will always be groups of four Minos.
If there are three or less Minos, Roxanne can handle two while Sherry can take on one.

Even if I were to fight one-on-one, I wouldn't get attacked easily provided I'm careful.
While I was thinking so, I ready Durandal. However, It's an NT Ant this time. It tries to attack me.
I'll never allow an insect to attack me.

After I take many out with Durandal, Sherry finally comes under attack.
NT Ant, Mino, NT Ant, Mino. A group of four monsters appears.
When I was moving on to next NT Ant after taking out first NT Ant with Rush, Sherry receives a head-butt from Mino.
The direction I was charging into and the direction Sherry was escaping to happened to be same, so she couldn't avoid it.

"My bad. I blocked your way."

After I take it out, I say to Sherry.

"Not at all. I should have known you were moving in that direction. It was careless of me."

In other words, I did block her way.
I receive the item and cast Heal.

"How was the monster's attack after equipping chainmail?"
"Damage was definitely light. Thank you, I'm fine now."

Two Heals were enough.
Much or less, the damage has surely decreased.

"Will we be able to clear 11th floor of Quratar's labyrinth now?"
"We won't know unless we try."

Although we have upgraded our equipment, the question remains.
And we won't have the answer unless we try.

That said, we can still predict based on how we perform on 11th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
Even if there are strong and weak points of monsters, there isn't much difference in overall strength at a given level.
Because the battles were long, we spent all morning exploring 11th floor of

Haruba's labyrinth.
We took a little break in the afternoon and then resumed the exploration.

"I went to 13th floor of Tare's labyrinth. The monster there is Rub Shrub that drops the item which Sherry needs to make the equipment next in order."
"Yes, that's right."

We enter 1st floor of Tare's labyrinth.
As a precaution, I bring Durandal out and add sixth job to be able to use both Alchemist's Plating and Warrior's Rush.
Having applied Plating, I recover my MP on 1st floor.

We should be ready now.
It's only two floors higher, so it shouldn't be that dangerous.
If push comes to shove, I'll use Rush with Durandal.
Having completed all preparations, we finally set foot on 13th floor.

"So, what kind of monster this Rub Shrub is?"
"I have never fought against it myself but I heard it uses long-range attacks. It shoots its branches from distance. Its weakness is fire type magic."

Ranged attacks?
Monsters onward from 12th floor should be stronger than those from 1st floor to 11th.
And it seems to be weak against fire type magic.

"Fire type magic huh? Well, I'll get to use different magic now. Roxanne, search for monsters."

I send Roxanne out.
We proceed under the guidance of Roxanne.
Two monsters appear.

Rub Shrub Lv13

Rub Shrub Lv13

It looks like a tree. It's smaller in size than Needle Wood.
Its root is smaller than and shaped differently from Needle Wood.
It looks totally like a tree.

Its movement speed appears to be slow.
It is slow.
So, I have to use fire magic this time?

Oh well.
There are two of them but that's alright.
Telling the number from smell is difficult.

"Here it comes."

It shoots magic. Roxanne dodges.
Something comes in from there where Roxanne was standing.

'Roxanne-san, please be more considerate.'
It's good to dodge and all but there may be someone standing behind.
It's not good for a vanguard to suddenly disappear from in front in a dark labyrinth.
A brown object passes right by me.

Oh shit!
I couldn't move even one millimeter.
There are times when it's dangerous to have Roxanne around.
Let's forget it for now. I'm dying here!

Is this the ranged attack of Rub Shrub?
To compensate for lack of movement speed, it has long-range attack?
It was a really cool attack nonetheless.

Damn it!
Is this divine retribution?

To think I would die to an attack of an ordinary Rub Shrub.
Before I die, however, I'll show you the best I have got.
I'll show you my best magic. My ultimate magic. My true power.

“Feel honored, for you’re the first to witness this magic. Heed my call, descend from far end of unending universe, crush all to nothingness — Meteor Crash!”

I use bonus spell.
Meteor Crash.
It’s the same spell which I wasn’t able to use earlier.

Now that I have raised my level, I should be able to use it.
No, I must be able to use it.
For I have used it.

I can feel my MP decreasing considerably.
Success!
My MP is almost used up. The magic materializes.
I have finally succeeded!

Over my head, appear burning rocks.
Meteorite. Lit by red hot lava.
It dyes the cave red.

The red hot meteorite strikes the ground.
The cave starts to get filled up.
It starts to accumulate.
One. Two.

Roaring sound could be heard as it cuts its way through the air.

“Eh?”
“What?”

A huge rock goes past dumbstruck Roxanne and Sherry.
They’re fine. It didn’t hit them.
Because I didn’t choose a target, Meteor Crash struck entire area.
Although it struck entire area, for some reason, it didn’t hit people.
Roxanne and Sherry are safe.

Roxanne dodged it herself.
Sherry, however, couldn’t. It grazed Sherry’s head. Surprisingly, it didn’t inflict any damage.

The huge rock advances.
The huge rock advances leaving marks and sparks behind.
It illuminates the cave.

It crashes into the Rub Shrubs.
The meteorite completely smashes the two Rub Shrubs.

Plank

Plank

Silence ensues. There's neither the meteorite nor the monsters.
What remained were two planks.
One hit?
Like I thought, bonus spells are truly powerful.

"What was that just now?"
"New magic attack."
"Master has such powerful magic. As expected of master."
"B-But one hit?"

Seven magic attacks are required to take out Lv11 monsters.
Considering that, you can figure out how powerful Meteor Crash was.
But Rub Shrubs are weak against fire type magic.
Because meteorite was burning red, it might be fire type magic attack.

Still, it was unexpectedly powerful. I might have overdone it.
"A-Amazing!"

At the same time, it took considerable MP.
Too much.
I seem to have used too much of my MP.

After recovering some MP on 1st floor of Tare's labyrinth, I move to 11th floor of Haruba's labyrinth to recover rest of my MP.
Moving between two floors of same labyrinth is less taxing than moving between two labyrinths.
However, only one Lv1 monster appears on 1st floor, so recovery takes too long.

After recovering MP on 11th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, I return to 13th floor of Tare's labyrinth.
I want to try Durandal this time.
If I feel I can't take them out, I'll just have them eat Meteor Crash.

"Once more. Search for small groups."

Under Roxanne's guidance, we find a lone Rub Shrub.
Exactly what I wanted.
I raise Durandal and charge.
If I don't do it quickly, it'll shoot its branch.

Before I could close the distance, it shoots its branch.
I could see orange-colored magic but I was unable to dodge.
The branch hits my chest where I have my leather jacket on.
What an impact.

It hurts!
Such power, even though I was covered with Plating.
Because it came to a stop, I charge to close the distance
I have no time to apply Plating again.

I raise the sword high up, activate Rush and strike it down on the Rub Shrub.
It's not dead after one strike.
I use Rush again.

It's much stronger than I expected.
I'm surprised.
Someone exists in this world who can take two Rush attacks and still be alive.

Even two Rush attacks couldn't get rid of it.
While it begins to launch another attack, I swing my sword from the side.
Third Rush.
The Rub Shrub collapses.

Three Rush attacks?
One Rush can take out a Lv11 monster.

How can a monster be three times stronger with a difference of only two floors?
I wonder if the difference of strength between monsters of 11th and 12th floors is great as well.
So, monsters of 11th floor are small fries?
Probationary period is over.

Well, if they're few, I can make do with Durandal.
We can hunt some more on 13th floor.
I'll give them slow death, if that's want they want.

"How many planks do you need?"
"Five to six should suffice for now."

Six huh?
We have collected three so far.
Alright, I'm ready. Let's get three more.

Another Rub Shrub comes out and shoots magic.
It's comparatively more difficult to take it out using Durandal.
Magic attack is better.
This time, I'll turn it to smithereens.

"Annihilate."

I call for Gamma Ray Burst in my mind.
It's another bonus spell beside Meteor Crash.
Meteor Crash isn't the only bonus spell I have.
Whether it's fire type magic or not, I don't know. But what I do know is that it's a Lv13 monster.

And… Nothing happens.

My MP is seemingly not enough for Gamma Ray Burst.
Even though my level is fairly high.
Does it need even more MP than Meteor Crash?
Well, even Meteor Crash took almost all of my MP. It probably needs only slightly more.

Oh well, I'll use Meteor Crash then.
Sparks scatter as red hot meteorite strikes.
Wow!
Look, Roxanne, Sherry… Fireworks!

Chapter 77 - The Wand's Limit

At the moment, I am fighting Rub Shrubs on the 13th floor of Tare's labyrinth.

"Are there only Rub Shrubs on this floor?"

I asked Roxanne.
I don't think that would be the case though.

"Well, that seems to be the case for the small groups."
"That's fine then."
"I can smell a monster we haven't fought yet. I think it's the monster from the 12th floor."
"Information about the 12th floor of this labyrinth wasn't available in the guild back then."

Sherry doesn't know about it.
I could have asked the explorer at the entrance, but I didn't care about it that much.
Maybe I should have?
It would have been better.

"I smell a Collagen Coral."
"It's the monster from the 10th or 11th floor."

Did the explorers guild have information up to the first nine floors?
The monsters from up to the ninth floor probably won't appear here.

"Are they few?"
"yes, I think one, or maybe two."
"Take us there."
"Certainly."

I should try fighting some monsters from the lower floors.
Rub Shrub requires three [Rush] attacks, is it because it's Lv13, or because it's a Rub Shrub?

After moving for a while, we get to the Collagen Coral Lv13.
The level seems to go up like normal, even for monsters from the lower floors.

I prepare, and then use a [Rush].
I use another one straight away.
The collagen coral is defeated after two [Rush] attacks.

Two [Rush]'s.
One [Rush] is enough for the 11th floor, so that's probably a normal increase.
It's possible that I could defeat it with one [Rush], and a Durandal swing.
It's not unreasonably stronger.

Two [Rush]'s were not enough for the Rub Shrub.
Is the strength of monsters from the 12th floor onward 1.5-2 times more than the lower floor monsters?
I'll need to check it.

"Can you find the monster from the 12th floor? It can be in a group because I'll use magic."
"Ok."

I asked Roxanne, and she took us to the monster whose smell she had not previously smelt.

Pig hog Lv13

Two Rub Shrubs and a Pig Hog appeared.
It's not a monster from the first 11 floors, so it must be the monster from the 12th floor.
It's a pig the size of a piglet.
It has grown tusks, but no whiskers.

I use [Meteor Crash].
The two Rub Shrubs are defeated.
The Pig Hog is not.
Is [Meteor Crash] classified as fire attribute magic?

I switch weapon from wand to Durandal.
I run towards the piglet.
It might have a long distance attack, but probably not.
It did not shoot as I approached.

[Rush] is blasted into it.
It did not fall.
It calmly shrugs it off. I use [Rush] again.

It finally fell down.
Two [Rush]'s?

The monsters from the 12th floor onwards are definitely stronger than the monsters from the lower floors. I'm not sure by how much, since I was cautious and used [Rush].
If I consider that [Meteor Crash] is fire attribute magic, and does double damage to the Rub Shrub, the Pig Hog should have taken at least half as much.
The Collagen Coral Lv13 took two [Rush]'s, so do monsters from the 12th floor and higher have twice as much strength?

Is [Meteor Crash] only barely able to kill a Rub Shrub?
Does [Meteor Crash] only have the same power as two [Rush]'s?

"The monster from the 12th floor is Pig Hog."
"Do you know about it?"
"Just that. I don't know any details."
"The Pig Hog is an earth attribute monster. It has a resistance to earth magic, and can use earth magic. Water magic is its weak point."

Sherry gives us explanation.
I only knew the name because of [Appraisal], I don't know anything else.
Also, its dropped item is pork ribs.
The ingredients for tonight's dinner have been decided.

I need to recover a bit with Durandal, so we went to the 11th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
I slaughtered some Minos and recovered MP.
Why doesn't Mino leave beef ribs?
They might be sold at a butcher's shop.

I calm down after recovering some MP.
Beef ribs would be nice.
Where would they come from?

I can fight on the 13th floor with [Meteor Crash] and Durandal.
As a general rule, I should fight stronger monsters to improve myself.
But in my case, I need to consider experience value skills.
I'm forced to sacrifice some to use Durandal, alchemist's [Plating], and warrior's [Rush].

Over using [Meteor Crash] is also undesirable.
There is a chance of being seen by someone.
Wizards can use [Fireball] and [Water Storm], so people who saw it would just think I was a wizard.
[Meteor Crash] doesn't exist here and is like a cheat.

Is it better to stay on the 11th floor?
It might still be too early to go to the 13th floor.
The 11th floor is a better hunting ground.
Since I've already collected some planks, I continue hunting on 11th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

We finish exploring, then sell of our items and return home.
We got planks from the Rub Shrubs again today.
Sherry needs them to make new equipment.

Next equipment is club.
Sherry's skill is catching up with our equipment.
Maybe that's bad?

The strength of monsters from the 12th floor and up is double.
Currently, seven spells are required to defeat a monster on the 11th floor.
It would be 14 if it's double.

14 spells is too much.
Even thread is instant if used.
Fire magic is the Rub Shrub's weakness, so I'd only need half the spells if I used fire on it.
If other monsters are mixed in, it won't be good.

Defeating monsters on the 12th floor and up seems to be quite difficult.
We can do it, but it's not easy.
I think it's time to increase our power, especially upgrade the wand.

What do parties do without a wizard?
Do they just get more people?
If they have someone on recovery job, like a priest or monk, then they can probably do it even if it takes a while.

I'm filling the recovery position in our party.
There is no problem with recovering after the fight has ended.
The problem is recovering during a fight.

Defeating monsters also depends on my magic.
If I recover during combat, it delays defeating monsters.
Taking longer in a fight against something like a Green Caterpillar would be bad.

Should I switch Roxanne or Sherry to recovery?
When I take out Durandal, a priest could respond to emergencies.
Things would be a bit easier with a priest.

Is it bad to make a recovery position if I don't have enough vanguards?
The number of people isn't enough.

"…Master. …Master."

Roxanne's voice fades in as I think about it.
I hadn't noticed it.

"Sorry. What's the matter?"
"There was a message on the door. It's from Luke. He seems to have made a successful bid on a Rabbit Monster Card."

While we were in the labyrinth, a messanger seems to have come from the broker, Luke.

"Oh. Rabbit? Rabbit Monster Card gives [Incantation Delay], right?"
"Yes, that's right."

Sherry confirms it.
It can become [Incantation Interruption] if fused together with the Kobold Monster Card.

If I put [Incantation Interruption] on Sherry's weapon, it'll help my strategy.
She will be able to cancel the spell from the Green Caterpillar Lv11 as well.
The long distance attack from the Rub Shrubs can't be prevented though.

There's nothing we can do about long distance attacks.
The skills and magic can be prevented after we get close.
Even that much would be good.

Next morning, we went to Quratar's labyrinth first.
We have the long awaited chainmail.
It's time to try it out.

I'm not sure how well we can fight while covered in thread.
Some risks can't be avoided.
We can't make it to the next floor unless our safety has been ensured.

Green Caterpillar Lv11 doesn't use thread too often, so Sherry doesn't have to worry much, but there's always a chance.
This is the reason I improved her armor.
I'm still worried about it a bit, but that's normal.

"We'll go to Quratar's 11th floor first. I want to see how we do with the chainmail."
"Um, then should I recieve an attack?"

Sherry asks.
I see.
Should she take an attack?
If we wait for a random thread attack, there might be unforseen danger.

It's an unpleasant thing to recieve an attack from an enemy.
Being hit, I'm not sure about it. Painful things are painful.
I'd hesitate if it was me.
Sherry's rational behaviour helps me.

“Sorry. I’ll leave it to you then.”
“Try and find a place with a small number of Green Caterpillars.”
“Preferably without Escape Goats, since I will have to use six attacks and they will run away.”
“Understood.”

Under Roxanne’s guidance, we encounter two Green Caterpillars and an NT Ant.
The ant is killed because of four [Water Storm]’s
I use two more.

After the sixth spell, Sherry takes a step to the front.
She’s bent slightly at the waist.
Even though she knows what to do, she has to resist the urge to dodge at the waist because the impact will be different.
It’s painful, and I can understand wanting to run away.

Green Caterpillar rams into her body.
Sherry doesn’t parry it with her club and receives the attack fully.
I immediately shoot seventh magic attack.
The Green caterpillar collapses.

“How was the attack?”

While casting [Heal], I ask her.

“As you would expect, their attacks are strong. Thank you, I’m fine now. I can probably hold for up to four magic attacks, I think.”

Two [Heal]’s were enough this time.
So, is she fine with getting caught up in its thread by the time I close distance with it?
We can’t be certain until it happens. It doesn’t mean, however, that I want it to happen.
In any case, this seems to be the only strategy available against Green Caterpillars Lv11 for the time being.

After fighting only once in Quratar’s labyrinth, we move back to 11th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth.
We continue to explore until breakfast.

It's a relief that we can take on 11th floor without much trouble.
After leaving the labyrinth, I deliver the mirror and then have breakfast.

"Now that we have upgraded our armors, we should work on weapons."
"Weapons?"
"Rabbit Monster Card is availabe. We have no pressing problem on current floor either. However, Rub Shrubs on 13th floor are quite strong."

I start the conversation while munching on rabbit meat which Roxanne grilled.

"But master's magic can take them out in one hit."
"To be honest, it's not that easy."
"I see. It must be trump card."

In my present condition, I can't cast two [Meteor Crash]'s conscutively.
If i take into accout efficiency of MP consumption and the risk of getting exposed, it's not a good idea to go around shooting meteors.
It should be reserved as trump card against bosses or when we are surrounded.

"That's true. Monsters from 12th floor onward are quite strong. From 23rd floor onward, monsters will be even stronger."

Sherry says in support.
Monsters from 12th floor onward will be a lot stronger in comparison to first eleven floors.
And the difficulty level will increase again from 23rd floor.
Well, the point is, the higher we move, the stronger the monsters become.

"I need to upgrade my wand. Incidentally, is there a monster card that increases power of magic attacks?"
"There is, Goat Monster Card."
"Goat huh? I'll ask Luke to arrange that one. Next is Sherry's club."

Until now, I haven't asked Luke to arrange for a card that increases power of magic attacks.
Don't fix that which isn't broken.
But now it's broken.
So, I have to fix it.

“My club?”
“[Incantation Interruption] should be attached to Sherry’s weapon. Roxanne can dodge attacks herself, so what remains is your club.”
“But we need Kobold Monster Card for [Incantation Interruption].”
“[Incantation Delay] will be of no use if only Sherry’s weapon has it.”

I have my Durandal.
Roxanne can dodge even magic attacks and skills.
Only Sherry is left. Therefore, I’ll have her attach [Incantation Interruption] to her weapon.
Roxanne can take on the monster from front as vanguard while Sherry can hit it from the side with [Incantation Interruption].

“Thank you. Still, it’s a waste to attach [Incantation Interruption] to a club. If it were attached to a war hammer or a flail, it would sell for good price.”

War hammer? Flail?
both these weapons and club are all classified as hammer, it seems.

“Hammer is good but how about spear?”
“Spear?”

Sherry can use both hammer and spear.

“There’ll be merit in attaching [Incantation Interruption] to a spear, for it has long reach.”
“I see. That’s certainly true.”
“Currently, there are not many situations where we are surrounded by monsters, so there’s not much need of swinging a club.”
“That’s right. However, we have been fighting mostly against NT Ants and Escape Goats. I have no idea if it’ll be same against other monsters.”

There is another reason why I’m insisting on spear.
Oh well.
I’ll have to spit it out, I guess.

“We will eventually have more party members. the more the party members, the less the opportunities you’ll have to swing your club.”

I have to stress on the need for more party members.

“Okay.”
“The more party members we have, the more options we have for vanguard. Sherry can then drop behind vanguard and attack with spear. In that case, you can also take on the role of healer. If you use spear, we can afford to have more flexible strategy.”
“But I’m not a shrine maiden.”

Ah, that’s right.
I have yet to tell her that she has shrine maiden job.

“It’s alright. You’re a master smith already, so don’t worry.”
“Okay… I’ll do my best.”
“As for healer, vanguard can take on that role.”

When Sherry nods in affirmation, albeit forced, Roxanne interjects.

“Really?”
“Yes. monk or shrine maiden is not necessarily a job for backline, especially when the party is small.”
“Because they can use [Heal] if they receive attack?”

If party is small, it’s not a good idea to have distinct vanguard and rearguard roles.
Monks and shrine maidens can act as vanguard too.

“To be able to hold monsters from front and heal party members in the back — this is what people, who enter labyrinth, aspire to be.”

Like the Goddess of Liberty who led masses during French Revolution?
Roxanne is perfect for this role.

“Well, the role of healer will be for later. My healing is enough for now. As for Sherry’s weapon, spear will be best in my opinion. it’ll allow us be more flexible in our approach.”
“I understand.”

In any case, spear will be best for Sherry.
And now that she has consented to it, Sherry’s weapon will be spear from now on.

Chapter 78 - Rod

After breakfast, Sherry does her smithing.

“What is the next thing you should make?”
“A wooden walking stick, it needs two boards to make.”
“A walking stick like a cane? Is it different from my wand?”

I asked as I passed her the boards.

“The wand type cane strengthens the power of magic. The walking stick type cane can be used to beat monsters, as well as strengthening the power of magic a bit. Roxanne said a while ago that priests and shrine maidens will use it if they are in a vanguard position.”
“Ah, so it’s useful for both.”

The price is about the same, so maybe the walking stick is weaker.
If the strength wasn’t related to price, then the wand would be weaker.
For my weapon, I think the wand is better?

In the future I might find a good candidate to use the walking stick type.
There’s nobody for it yet, but we will probably have a difficult time in the future as the demons get stronger.
Someone using magic, and then attacking a demon with a walking stick that has [MP absorption] might be a good fighting style.

I don’t think I’ll be able to absorb MP with a magic attack.
I don’t recover MP if I have Durandal out while using magic.
Even if I put [MP absorption] on my wand, or a walking stick, I don’t think either would recover MP while casting.

“I’ll make it.”

Sherry has the boards, and recites the incantation for the skill.
A dazzling light flows out, and then stops before long.
A walking stick is left in her hand.

“Oh, it’s a success.”
“Oh, there’s supposed to be a large chance of failure if you haven’t been

training for a long time, this is kind of anti-climactic."
"It's because Sherry is excellent."

Making a walking stick from two boards leaves me with a feeling of it being wrong.
To begin with, it's strange that clubs and walking sticks are made using square boards.
I can understand a wooden shield being made from a wooden board.
I can't help but wonder about the magic that the skill uses though.

"Thank you. The wooden walking stick is a cane that also has physical attack power."
"It looks like it would hurt a bit."
"Aside from the walking stick, there is also a weapon called the sacred spear that strengthens magic. It's quite valuable though, and can be hard to get outside the auctions."
"Oh, there is?"

It might be a good weapon for someone in a recovery job to attack from the rear.

After smithing, I head to the merchants guild.
I buy the rabbit monster card from Luke.
I confirm it's the real thing with [Analyze].

"I'd like to use this with the kobold monster card. Is the price for one still around 5,200 nars?"
"Close. The last time was 5,300 nars and the time before that was 5,200 nars."
"Well, it can't be helped, if you can get it for up to 5,400 nars then I would like it."

People are still paying 5,200 nars for the kobold monster card.
I want it.
I need to be tenacious.
I want to get one soon.

The last winning bid for the kobold monster card was 5,300 nars.
I have to pay even more if I want one.

“I’ll get it. You just want one?”
“…that’s right.”

Well, Sherry won’t fail, so I just need one.
But, Luke can’t understand that.
Is there a chance of failing when fusing it with the rabbit monster card as well?
One kobold monster card gets me one chance.

The person who bid 5,300 nars last time might not bid anymore.
Maybe I didn’t need to offer 5,400 nars?
There’s no choice if I want to be sure to get it.

People buy it for 5,200 nars as well.
People will also need to buy the same number of monster cards that fuse with the one they have.
If they miss out on the kobold monster card, they can always go hunting for it.

If I think about it, maybe I could have waited a bit?
I could have saved hundreds of nars.
The amount of other bidders will decrease at some stage.

“Ok, I’ll aim for a kobold monster card for up to 5,400 nars.”
“I’d also like a goat monster card.”
“The goat monster card? The last successful bid was 5,000 nars.The time before last was 5,100. It might cost a bit more to obtain it immediately. It often sells from 4,700-4,800 when it’s cheap, and up to 5,400-5,500 if it’s expensive.”

Luke gives a quick answer.
I’ll remember it.
Sherry is looking at the list of bid results in the waiting room.

“That’s rather high.”
“The wizard is the main fire power in a party. Increasing magic attack power is the first choice for a party if they have a wizard. Also, parents of wizards are normally quite wealthy. It’s easy to go to upper floors if you have a wizard, so the price of the goat monster card goes up compared to other cards.”

So it's a card that rich people want?

"I see, so there's no helping it, I'll buy a goat monster card for up to 5,400 nars."
"Ok."

You're not going to ask if I'm fine with just one?
It's a necessary monster card for me.
I also need more cards for [Incantation interruption], and sacrificial misanga's, but I only need one goat monster card.

Just one will be fine.
I can't mention that one is enough though.
Luke doesn't need to know that Sherry will succeed every time.
That means I should probably buy extras.

Eventually I will need it on multiple items, so they won't be useless.
I need the goat monster card quickly though, since it increases magic attack power.
After ordering the kobold & goat monster cards, I leave Luke.

I leave the merchants guild by walking, instead of using the wall.
I go to a nearby weapons shop.

Spear: Steel spear: Skill slots – empty, empty, empty.

Is a steel spear a good item?
Three skills slots is probably it's maximum.
There are two with three slots.

"Choose one of these."

I pass the two to Sherry.

"Um, I'll do my best."

Sherry sounds like she's straining a bit as she answers.
Even if you don't choose well, I don't think there is a difference.

“Um”
“If I fail at fusion with this, I won’t be able to remake it.”

She’s muttering in a quiet voice.
I see, she’s worrying about monster card fusion.

“It will probably be alright.”

I pat her on the shoulder, and then turn to the canes.

Cane: Rod: Skill slots – empty, empty, empty.

Is this rod alright?
It might be the best cane available in the weapons shop, unless there is something made from damascus steel in the back of the store.
There isn’t much chance of there being one with an empty skill slot though.
This is enough for now.

In the case of cheap items, displayed in masses, it’s easy to find ones with empty skill slots.
The high quality items are displayed singly, so it doesn’t work out as well.
For an expensive, good item, the maximum number of skill slots will increase as well.
It’s hard to find one with large amounts of skill slots if they are just displayed one at a time.

The steel spear only had two available with three empty skill slots.
Weapons made from orichalcum are bought and sold by auction. How can I selectively pick one with free skill slots?
I worry for a moment as I think about the future.

I go to the weapons and armour shops frequently, so I’ll need to keep in mind to check for good items with empty skill slots.
I’m selling off the items that Sherry makes, so there isn’t any problem coming regularly.

Are the rod and steel spear the best things I can get from mass produced goods?
There’s probably not much difference between them, but I pick a suitable

rod.
Sherry gives me the spear she chose, and I buy them both.

I don't buy a weapon for Roxanne this time.
It costs three gold coins for the rod and steel spear.
If I think about it, I've bought Roxanne the hard leather jacket, and the amber necklace recently.

"Sorry, this time we are just getting weapons for Sherry & myself."
"Yes, I don't mind."

I comfort Roxanne as I leave the weapons shop.
I can't buy things for Roxanne all the time.

"At the moment there are no problems with the scimitar."
"Ok."

I can't favor her too much as a master.
Roxanne might start acting spoilt if I buy something for her every time.
Every now and then I need to show a firm attitude.

"We'll need to increase the amount of party members to strengthen our war potential. I can't just invest money into equipment."
"Yes. Certainly."

I can't be a sweet master all the time, this world doesn't allow it.
I can't spoil you.
I can't pamper you.

"I need to think of our income, I don't want to be a bad master."
"You aren't. Our meals and everything is luxurious."

I strengthen my resolve.
Dignity, bravery, manliness, I need to put on that kind of appearance.

"A bad, annoying master, wouldn't that cause someone to look for a new master?"
"Ah…yes."

Um.
Maybe I've become too dignified.

"We'll probably strengthen Roxanne's weapon some time soon."
"Thank you. My weapon is okay at the moment."
"Was the one handed sword hanging in the weapons store an Estoc? It looked like a good weapon."
"…I think that it was a good weapon."

Did my strict attitude work? Roxanne hesitated for a second.
I might have a strong resolve.
I think I was able to show off my dignity.

"Ok, we'll think about it in the future."
"Ah, yes."
"If Roxannes weapon becomes stronger, the whole party will be helped."
"Thank you."

Roxanne will also have her own opinion.
I can't be too arrogant.

We returned to the merchant guild, and used the wall there to travel to Haruba's 11th floor.
We need to test our new weapons.
I hold the rod, and pass the steel spear to Sherry.
Sherry passes me her club.

Kaga Michio|Male|17 years old.
Explorer Lv36|Hero Lv33|Wizard Lv36|Monk Lv34
Equipment: Rod|Leather Shoes|Leather Gloves|Leather Hat|Leather Armour|Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne|Female|16 years old.
Beast Warrior Lv25
Equipment|Scimitar|Leather Shoes|Leather Gloves|Leather Hat|Hard Leather Jacket|Wooden Shield

Sherry|Female|16 years old.
Master Smith Lv23
Equipment:Steel Spear|Waterproof Leather Mittens|Leather Hat|Chain mail|Leather Shoes

As expected, the spear isn't a weapon you can carry around town.
It's length is over two meters.
Sherry said that it isn't a weapon used by a vanguard.

"Since Sherry may need some time to get used to her new weapon, please guide us to somewhere with a small number of demons for now."
"I understand."
"Sherry, I know the spear isn't easy to use as a vanguard, but please do your best."
"Yes, I will."
"Thinking about it again, it's alright if there is a large number, since my cane has been upgraded as well and it should be an easier fight than before, so I'll leave it to Roxanne's judgement."

First Roxanne guides us to a place with one ant.
NT ant Lv11 is defeated with three [Water ball]'s.
It became smoke before Sherry got to it with her spear.

Three.
It was four with the wand, so it's an improvement.

Next, Roxane leads us to a place with one mino.
[Fire ball] is used.
I was not able to defeat it before it made it to us.

Roxanne stands in the way of the demon.
Sherry thrusts the spear from the side, and I throw a [Fire ball].
Roxanne easily evades the cow.
I used a total of five [Fire ball]'s.
The Lv11 was defeated.

It's five? The mino doesn't have a weakness to any kind of magic.
It was seven shots with the wand, and five with the rod.
So far so good.

So if demons on the 12th floor are 1.5 – 2x stronger, then the amount of spells needed would be 8-10.
It should be a reasonably tough fight on the upper floors.

Chapter 79 - Successful Escape

Evening. We receive message from Luke a day after placing order for monster cards.
When we arrive at home, we find a note at the entrance.
“There seemed to be a successful bid of 4,400 Nar for Caterpillar Monster Card.”

Roxanne reads the note.
Even though I asked him specifically for Kobold and Goat Monster Cards.

“Last time, it was 4,300 Nar. He’s probably observing our reaction to an increase in price of 100 Nar.”
Sherry cautions.

“Hmm… to go that far.”

Sherry has a really low opinion of brokers.
If he doesn’t bring it down, however, I’ll not buy it.

“Brokers use underhanded methods as much as possible.”
“You may be right.”
“It’s true. It’s only rational to think so.”
“Now that you say it, I think so too.”

If rational Sherry says that it’s rational, it has to be rational.
Next morning. We visit the merchant guild.
Luke appears with two monster cards.

“This one is Caterpillar Monster Card and this one is Goat Monster Card which I won in the auction just yesterday.”

Luke places two monster cards separately on the table.
It’s unnecessary, however, for I can use Appraisal.
As per Appraisal, both the cards are genuine.

“Goat Monster Card huh?”
“Successful bid was 5,400 Nar.”

Was it really 5,400 Nar or did he move it up to 5,400 Nar himself?
What Sherry said earlier seems to be right.
It doesn't look like brokers work in the best interests of their clients.

"That was quick."
"There was some competition but I managed to win it."

There's no guarantee that the person he competed with wasn't his partner.

"We don't have immediate need for more Goat Monster Cards. Don't buy any further unless the price drops to 5,200 Nar."
"Very well."

This time, I make my discontent known.
Luke will surely figure out that I'm angry.
Even if he doesn't, I have no problem with it as long as the price will be low hereafter.
One Goat Monster Card will suffice for now.

"How much for these two cards?"
"Ah, yes. Let's see… including advance payment of commission for next card, 10,500 Nar."

Out of 10,500 Nar, 5,400 Nar and 4,400 Nar pertain to cards. So, the commission is 700 Nar? Commission for two cards should be 1,000 Nar.
30% discount huh?
Because the prices vary much, he seems to have used Calc.
Like I thought, 30% discount doesn't work on auction bid.

I make the payment with a gold coin and silver coins.
When we return home, I give Caterpillar Monster Card to Sherry for fusion.
Because Sacrificial Misanga is a useful accessory, I have her make it immediately.

"I'm still nervous in fusing monster card."
"It's alright. I'm responsible if it fails. Don't worry."
"Okay."

I have already told Sherry that I can identify if a monster card can be fused with an equipment.

In other words, I'm at fault if it fails.
That said, I can't think of a reason for it to fail.

"So, which skill does Goat Monster Card give?"
"If fused with a weapon or an accessory, it gives Increase in Intelligence skill. If fused simultaneously with Kobold Monster Card, it gives 2x Intelligence skill."

After successfully fusing the monster card as a matter of course, Sherry explains.
Because Kobold Monster Card upgrades skills of other cards, if fused simultaneously, it most probably doubles the effect of Increase in Intelligence skill, not the intelligence itself.
So, an increase of 30% will become over 50%?

"Can it be attached to an accessory?"
"Yes, it can be."
"So, is it better to attach it to an accessory than attaching it to a weapon? That way, it'll be there even if I upgrade weapon, right? Also, if I attach 2x Increase in Intelligence skill to both weapon and accessory, can't the increase in intelligence be 4x?"
"It's not possible."

I was told earlier that effects from offensive skills can't be stacked.
My dream remains a dream.

"How about attaching same skill to same equipment more than once?"
"I haven't heard anything in that regard."

If attaching second skill results in failure, first skill disappears as well.
Therefore, attaching multiple skills is not common.
Considering the risk, no one would try to attach same skill twice.

As far as I'm concerned, I'm not afraid of attaching multiple skills.
Should I give it a try?
If the equipment breaks, however, I'll become a laughing stock.

Let's get back to topic. Should I fuse Goat Monster Card with the rod?
For accessory, I have Sacrificial Misanga.
I have already told Luke to get it at lower price next time. We can buy more cards later without any problem.

Shouldn't I wait for Kobold Monster Card before having it fused with the rod?

"In any case, Kobold Monster Card will be available soon. Roxanne, put this Sacrificial Misanga on."
"Umm… Can't you sell it?"

Roxanne hesitates in receiving the Sacrificial Misanga.

"If it's in excess of our requirement, I'll sell it. But we must keep one in spare. And rather than keeping the spare one in the closet, it's better for Roxanne to have it."

Is Sacrificial Misanga not an equipment that anyone can put on.
Is this why she's reluctant?

"But I may receive an attack and break it."

I thought it would be a simple matter but she's making it difficult.
It's not working.

"Sherry, Sacrificial Misanga doesn't cost hundreds of thousands, right?"
"Yes, its price ranges between 30,000 and 40,000 Nar."
"Right, it's not as valuable as Roxanne. What will I do if something were to happen to Roxanne?"

Roxanne is the one who's exposed to enemy attacks the most. Sacrificial Misanga is a must have item for her.
If Roxanne were to become unable to fight, our entire party would get wiped out.

Caterpillar Monster Card costs only a little over 4,000 Nar.
Because fusion succeeds once in, let's say, ten attempts, the price of Sacrificial Misanga is in tens of thousands.
It may be more expensive than all of her equipment combined but not more valuable than Roxanne herself.

"O-Okay. Thank you."

I have finally convinced her to put on the Sacrificial Misanga.
I approach Roxanne who has sit down.

“I’ll tie it for you. So, where do you want it? Ankle or wrist?”
“A-Ankle. It’ll attract less attention that way.”

If it’s on wrist, it’ll be visible to onlookers.
It’s not like they can tell if it’s a misanga or Sacrificial Misanga.
The duke and Cassia both wear Sacrificial Misanga on their wrist.

I tie it around her ankle.
If you wear it on your ankle and put trousers on, it won’t be visible.
It’ll invite carelessness from those who may attack you sneakily.

But there’s a merit in wearing it on your wrist as well. You’ll immediately know if it breaks.
Because everyone knows that influential figures such as the duke and the duchess will be wearing Sacrificial Misanga, there’s no use in hiding it.
On the other hand, if Roxanne wears it on her wrist, people may think that she’s rich which will solicit even more attacks.

“Well then, can you please roll it up?”

Roxanne takes her shoes off and rolls her trousers up.
Her white, delicate shin is naked right in front of my eyes.

So smooth. So slick.
I so want to rub my cheeks on it.
It’s bathed in the light coming in through window.
Peeking through her clothes under light has its own charm.

I subconsciously extend my hand out to stroke it. I try to look at her face for her expression.
N-No, it’ll be fine.
I’m not doing anything wrong.

She’s not stopping me which means it’s not wrong.
Now that I know it’s not wrong, I can go all the way.
I’m wracking my brain thinking of how to turn ‘tying the misanga’ into ‘going all the way.’

There's no helping it.
I suppress my urge to stroke it, rub my cheeks on it and kiss it, and tie the misanga on her ankle.

I'll do it later tonight.
I'll wait patiently.
I'll not allow prey to get away just like that.

"Thank you."

Roxanne expresses her gratitude after I tie the misanga.
Let's see if you'll say the same thing later tonight.

I decide to pay a visit to the amber merchant in the afternoon.
Procurement of ten mirrors for Gozer will be over in next trip.
I have to buy a necklace for the workshop owner's wife before the trip.
I go to Bode via Haruba's labyrinth.

"There's one raw amber gemstone available. Price is same as last time, 800 Nar that is. What do you say?"
"I want to buy a necklace. Can I buy the gemstone with it?"

There seems to be just one raw amber gemstone.
Like I thought, it's difficult to earn big in this trade.
Even if amber was mined, the amber merchant would not receive all of it.

For now, even one will suffice.
30% discount will be effective anyway.

I let Roxanne and Sherry choose the necklace.
The more the opinions, the better.

"Well then, here are the wooden cases from Talem."

The catman merchant brings cases along with necklaces.

I asked him for cases earlier.
It's a beautiful, white case.
Subtle brown, circular patterns complete the look.

“It really looks good.”
“It’s only a prototype. Because you were the one who came up with this idea, I would like you to receive it as gift.”
“Ah, you didn’t have to. Thank you very much.”

I receive two cases.
It’s quite heavy.
It doesn’t look like it but it’s heavy.

It doesn’t seem to have been painted. Is it the wood that’s white?
It’s even better than what it seemed at first.
Its weight adds to its luxurious feel, so it’s welcomed.

“Which one looks better? This one or this one?”
“Both look pretty.”
“If you had to pick one, which one would you pick?”
“This one, I think.”

These two seem to have decided on the necklace.
Sherry finally picks one of the two.

This is probably the same necklace which he showed me on my first visit to the store.
It was priced at 55,000 Nar if I remember correctly.
Because it was showed to me on my first visit, it’s probably this store’s most prized necklace.

Well, I don’t know much about jewellery, so I’m not sure.
Sherry, however, shares same opinion as the store.
Then I’ll go with this one.

Sherry may have a keen eye, for she bought a book in her grandfather’s days.
Even if she doesn’t have a keen eye, she has established good relationship with the owner’s wife.
It’s best if Sherry picks it.

“Well then, I would like to buy this necklace and the raw amber gemstone.”
“Thank you. Because you received letter of recommendation personally from the duke, I’ll give you special price of 39,060 Nar.”

Influence of the duke's letter of recommendation is incredible. I feel embarrassed.
30% discount is effective as well.
I pay the amount.
Beside gold coins, ninety silver coins and sixty copper coins.

"That's great."
"The case has been included as well. Although it costs about 200 Nar, it'll not be charged, for you were the one who gave us this idea in the first place."

The amber merchant removes the necklace from the cloth bag, puts it in the case and passes it to me.
Had the case been charged from me, it would have been discounted by 30% anyway.
But it's free, so it's even better.

After returning home, I hand the two their necklaces and take them to Palmasque.
I put the necklaces on them in Zabir's labyrinth and hand them one silver coin.

"You're not coming with us again?"

Sherry asks nervously.
She looks uneasy.

If she sells the necklace to the owner's wife for twenty five gold coins, it'll be same as Sherry's price.
Actually, it'll be more than Sherry's price because Sherry was bought at 30% discount.
She would, of course, be nervous in carrying an item which is more expensive than herself.

Not just that, she's wearing a necklace herself.
If she runs away with it, she won't have to be worried for the rest of her life.

"It's alright. Master trusts us."
"O-Okay."

Roxanne knows it well.
Rather, she has unnecessarily high opinion of me.
After Sherry regains courage, I take them to Palmasque's adventurer guild.

I see the two off.
When they come back with two more mirrors, procurement of ten mirrors will be over.
I won't ever have to go back home from Palmasque directly. For foreseeable future at least.
There's an unspeakably pleasant feeling when I think about it.

This feeling just won't go away.
Meanwhile, a commotion was taking place in the adventurer guild.

Chapter 80 - DRAGON

「A dragon…you say……?」,

I unconsciously muttered after being welcomed by the two.
I arrived at Palmasque's adventurer's guild after passing time at home and at the labyrinth.
Roxanne reported that a dragon had appeared when I came back.

「Yes, it seems that it attacked the coast this morning. Unfortunately, it was already intercepted when we arrived.」

Though I don't know what's unfortunate about that, is the ruckus in the adventurer's guild because of that?
What a frightening situation.

Dragons seem to exist in this world.
Not only that, the city was also attacked.
That must be the reason for having such high castle walls.

However, both of them have a mirror.
It's already greatly justified to come here for that.

「Is it common for this place to be attacked by dragons?」

It's the last jump from Palmasque. After recovering MP in Quratar's labyrinth, I tried asking Sherry.
「It's more accurately a Drive Dragon. Palmasque, being an island can't be attacked by normal demons. But Drive Dragons can fly in the sky. It's something that happens quite often I think.」
「It's that often?」
「There's also a lot of people that have anti-dragon equipment because of this.」

Sherry replied to me calmly.
It seems dragon raids aren't a cause of concern, despite just being a near-miss.

Still, is it really normal?
It's probably the same concept as how Japanese people can tolerate earthquakes up to level three.
This world is scarier than I thought.

「I see」
「More importantly, the amber necklace was sold for 25 gold coins.」

Dragons were treated like that.
It's a dragon, you know, a dragon?

「Are drive dragons actually weak?」
「It is the strongest kind of demon that appears outside of the labyrinth.」

So it is by no means weak, I don't like it.
I feel that people here wouldn't even be surprised even if a level 5 earthquake hits.
Those guys live in the future.

「I-is that so?」

I received gold coins from Sherry
The gold coins seem to occupy two rows of slots in the item box.
Because of the several different rows of skins, the item box is going to be full soon.
An item box can't stack different kinds of similar items, so the capacity is being filled.

If it's not enough, then I can set my cook job.
That's also difficult.
Seeing as I have them, I should also use them.
It isn't necessary for me to put coins and items in different lines to save space.

「The amber necklace that the boss's wife had bought was a considerably good item. I asked if 25 gold pieces were really alright, and confirmed it many times.」

I listened to the story while receiving the gold coins.
I expected the market price in Palmasqe for amber to be five times greater

than the market price in Bode. Was it a little more than that?
I feel a bit embarrassed since I did not know the proper market price.

「Was it considered too cheap? Well, it can't be helped. It's not really a loss.」
「I said it was a special service for being acquaintances. I also asked her to recommend us to other people since our prices are cheap.」
「Well done!」

Sherry's surprisingly a good talker.

「I was able to sell the case for ten silver coins. Since it was originally 200 nars.」
「As expected, of Sherry.」
「The Amber was sold for 35 silver coins. And, we could also buy the mirror from them for 20 silver coins.」

To be able to sell the small case which I got for free, as well as to ensure future deals with them.
Such a smooth talker.

「It was the right thing to entrust it to Sherry after all.」
「Thank you」

Is that it?
Does she hate brokers because they are similar to her?
Hatred of the same thing.
They are birds of a feather.

When I was returning from the labyrinth, I was contacted by Luke whom Sherry hates.
There seems to be a successful bid for a kobold card for 5400 Nars
It says that it's 5400 is it really the correct price?

「I want to fuse the kobold monster card and the goat monster card, that I had just won, to my rod. It will be more difficult otherwise on the 12th floor.」

I told them during supper.

「Ye…Yes! I'll do my best!」
「There'll be no problem if it's Sherry , though it would be bad if Sherry was anxious.」
「No, I'm not anxious at all」
「The demons in the 12th floor will strengthen considerably. Increasing our fighting potential is necessary. Perhaps it's time to add another party member.」

I was able to connect the two topics.
A new party member is essential to increase our fighting potential.
No, that's not what you're thinking at all.
It is definitely necessary to increase our fighting potential.

「Yes」
「I already received a letter of introduction from merchant Alan from Vale. The remaining order for mirrors are two pieces, I would like to go to the capital to look for a new party member the day after we finish selling everything.」

I made sure that the two of them nod after hearing my proposed schedule.
I have 40 gold coins in reserve, it should be sufficient enough as funds.

「The number of party members will increase then.」
「I believe that master will choose a suitable person.」
「Yes. Of course, it is necessary after all to increase our fighting potential.」

Roxanne's acknowledgement was obtained.
She doesn't publicly object at the very least.
All is good.

「With that said, Let's make the labyrinth exploration tomorrow a rest day, We can't have a new member join us when we are tired.」

The candy is given this time.
The so called carrot and stick. You should alternately give good news and bad news.
They would hate me if it's always the whip.

「It's going to be a break?」
「It's the same just like the other day, what would Roxanne want to do? Is Sherry fine with going to the library? 」
「Yes, that is fine.」

Looking in Sherry's direction, she nodded.
As I thought, Sherry decided to go the library.

「Because I don't have business tomorrow either, If Roxanne wants to go to the Labyrinth I could accompany you.」

I tell Roxanne who was at a loss of what to do.
When we took a break last time, Roxanne said an admirable thing about entering the labyrinth alone and training.
Though, I stopped it because I was scared of her entering alone, the situation is different this time however.

「Is it okay?」
「Probably, I'm also free tomorrow anyways.」

It doesn't have to be the labyrinth in particular.
Sightseeing, touring, even information gathering.
I don't have anything I want to do alone after all.
There's nothing for me to do in a holiday.

This is a holiday for Roxanne and Sherry to rest, not for me.

「Well then, please take care of me.」
「Understood. Also, would you cut my hair tomorrow? It seems to have grown quite a bit already.」

Though I had intended to cut my hair when I bought mirrors, I didn't have any chance to do so.
Might as well do it during this day off.

「Yes, Master」
「Please do so, Roxanne and Sherry's hair seems to be fine. 」
「Eh? But I think mine has grown a bit.」

Sherry says so while fiddling with her own hair, her hair seems to reach the shoulder already.
Does dwarves' hair grow quickly?

「I think it's fine to grow it even more.」
「It is still all right, Sherry」
「Is that so? Before, my hair becomes stiff when grown even a little, though it isn't now. Probably because Master washes our hair very well.」

Roxanne and Sherry can let their hair grow even more.
It is still too early to cut their hair.

The next morning, we enter the labyrinth before sunrise without resting.
Even if I'm resting, my senses will become dull if it's a complete rest.
Of course, there's no rest for night duties.

Sherry's going to go visit the library
I might have to let her rest tonight.
Roxanne will have to do her best then.

After having breakfast and selling the mirror, I gave one gold coin for the deposit and five silver coins to Sherry.
I first brought Sherry to the library.
Because the library has a fixed cost system until sunset, it's best to enter as quickly as possible.

I stopped by the merchant's guild before returning to get the kobold monster card.
I asked again to bid for another kobold monster card for 5,400 nars before returning home.
There, I sat in a chair while Roxanne cut my hair.

「I may not be good enough.」
「For me, as long as it's a hairstyle liked by Roxanne, it's more than enough. If Roxanne wouldn't dislike me, then it is already good.」
「I could never hate Master.」
「Thank you, then, please.」

In this world, it seems to be the usual for family to cut your hair. Well, they don't seem to particularly mind about hairstyles.

For me who didn't really care about my hair even back in Japan, it was the same here.

Roxanne cuts my hair with scissors.
Thought I thought scissors would be different, it's still the same from what you would call a common scissor.
There doesn't seem to be a problem for cutting hair with it.

「Is this fine, Master?」
「Do I look a bit cooler now?」
「Master is always the coolest.」

It's a bit embarrassing to be called the coolest.
She might just also be forced to say such words.

「Well then, which labyrinth would you like to go to?」
「If there would be too many enemies it might be dangerous, so I'd like to battle a boss. Rapid Rabbit's fast movement will also be good for training, so Vale labyrinth is probably good.」

When asked, there was an immediate reply.
So it's Vale labyrinth then?
Rapid Rabbit is the boss in the 9th floor of Vale Labyrinth
I don't want to fight the Rapid Rabbit, however, it seems hard to try and convince Roxanne not to enter the labyrinth.

「Uhm.. do you not want to go shopping in the Imperial Capital?」

I can't really say I don't want to fight the Rapid Rabbit.
We've already challenged the 9th floor boss in Vale Labyrinth countless times.
It's practically already impossible to count how many times we've fought there.
I choose to propose a different course of action.

「To the imperial capital.. is it okay?」

Anything would be better.
I wouldn't want to enter that boss room repeatedly anymore.
Even if it's hard to accompany Serious Roxanne during shopping.

TL: Serious Roxanne isn't really a thing, I just coined it to make it exaggerated.

「It's fine.」
「Yes, Thank you Master.」
「Tell me if there's anything you want.」

Because she already accepted, We immediately warped to the Imperial Capital
Before she changes her mind.

We went to shops we've never been before in the Imperial Capital
It became sort of an information gathering, two birds with one stone.
Roxanne and I continued to walk the road aimlessly.

「I think this looks good.」

Inside the clothing store, Roxanne puts a shirt in front of my chest.
It feels like a date.
Or rather, It is a date.
It's just the two of us after all.

When the party members increase, the bed will be smaller.
I'd like to look for a new bed today, but there's no way I can suggest such a thing with this kind of atmosphere.
As expected, I'll have to buy a bed by myself next time. I can't ruin this date.

After my shirt, Roxanne goes to the children's section and chooses carefully.
Is it for Sherry?
She chose one and said it was good.

「Is Roxanne not buying for herself?」
「This one is 300 Nars, while this one is 200 Nars, together it would already be five silver coins.」

500 nars for the two?
Just like last time, her pocket money is five silver coins.

「Ah, then I'll buy the clothes and just take it from our expenses.」
「Well, it wouldn't be a present for Sherry then..also..」
「I see.」
「Also, this is my gift.」

Roxanne hands me the shirt she chose earlier.
Even if I buy the clothes, even if it's for sherry, it would still be considered my property.
If Roxanne buys it with her money then gives it to Sherry the owner would then be Sherry.
This shirt also, I did not buy it with my money but this is Roxanne's gift to me.

「Thank you, then I'll buy Roxanne a piece of clothing today as well.」
「Is it all right?」
「You may choose what you like.」
「Thank you.」

Because Roxanne is my slave, all her belongings are considered my possessions until I die unlike with Sherry's.
After Roxanne choose clothes, we bought the three articles of clothing.
Because 30% discount worked, Roxanne actually still have remaining pocket money.
Oh well.

When we went out, I tried holding Roxanne's hand.

「Shall we go to the next shop over there?」
「…Yes」

Holding a girl's hands outdoors in broad daylight seems embarrassing somehow.
Is this how people in a date feel like?
Both Roxanne and I were carrying swords so there seems to be a sense of incompatibility somehow.

I grasp Roxanne's hands to feel its softness.
It's a smooth hand with the highest value.
Roxanne also grabs my hand back.

I invite Roxanne inside a nearby general store.
The store was a wooden shop that deals with wood products.
Many wood products are displayed.
We looked around the shop still holding hands.

「This?」
「It's probably a Wooden Basket」

I stop in front of a certain product.
As Roxanne said, it was a basket.
The bottom is ridden with holes like in a grid so that water would come out when poured.
The sides are firmly enclosed with a board.

「So there was something like this.」
「I've never seen it before in Quratar, It's probably something unnecessary.」

It's an instrument for draining water; I guess it really isn't necessary?
Is it that? Something like a luxury only used by rich people?

A Drainer made from wood.
Its appearance is as if it's a bamboo basket.
If you add a dragon brand, I wouldn't be surprised if it would be seen in a Chinese restaurant.

If it's reliably made, it could probably be also used as a steamer.
You just join the two lids together, put cloth in between and cover the lid properly. Boil the water in the bottom lid and you have a steamer.

Chapter 81 - Steamed Bread

“This is good, we’ll buy it and go home.”

I was excited after finding a bamboo steamer in a shop in the Imperial Capital.
Though it seems to be intended as a colander, and not a steamer.

“Ah, yes.”
“Let’s make some dessert with this today.”
“What kind of dessert?”
“Look forward to it.”

There doesn’t seem to be many kinds of dessert in this world.
Fruit and a hard biscuit at best.
Though people like the Duke & Cassia may have something.

There’s probably no helping it for commoners.
Roxanne really enjoyed the caramel too.

We went home first, and then out to buy eggs and milk.
Sugar is a good price in this world.
High level kobolds seem to drop kobold sugar.

I haven’t made dessert so far.
I could make crepes with milk, flour, egg & sugar, but I never made them in Japan, so I haven’t tried it here either.
However, if I have a steamer, I can do something.

Like crepes, I’ve never made pudding either, but I suddenly have a craving for it.
Pudding will require milk, egg, and sugar.
Vanilla essence is impossible.
I can get caramel by boiling down the sugar, so I’ll manage somehow.

Will there be problems with the quantity and steaming time?
Perhaps I’ll have to try it several times.

I have previously made steamed bread in a class at home.
The raw materials were flour, sugar, milk, egg, and bicarbonate soda.
For bicarbonate soda, there is the shell powder that I use to make soap.

First of all, the dough is made and placed down.
Roxanne watches as I make the dough.
Water is boiled in the wok, and the steaming basket is placed over the water. The dough is wrapped in a cloth, and placed in a cup in the steaming basket, and a wooden board is placed on top.
While it's steaming, Roxanne watches the low flame to maintain the temperature.

In the meantime, I went to meet Sherry in the Imperial Capital.

"There's a sweet smell."

Sherry smells like sake, but Roxanne isn't commenting on that.
I can't smell it, is it sweet?
People who can sniff out demons are different.

After dinner, the steaming basket is removed from the wok, and Roxanne takes a pudding.
It's soft when you remove it from the cup.
It steamed well, and has increased in moisture.

"Let's eat."
"Yes."
"Let's."

When I bite into it, it has a springy texture.
It's not bad.
Maybe a little too much sugar.

"Oh, it's delicious, Master."
"This is great."

It seems to be quite popular with these two.
They put the steamed bread in their mouths with a smile.
I will increase the harem members.
This might have atoned for my sins a bit.

I'll make it sometimes from now on.
It's inconvenient that the steamed bread is high in calories.

"Well then, Master, this is a gift from me. Please continue to look after me in the future."

When the meal ends, the clothes that Roxanne bought today are handed out.
I stand up and receive it gratefully.

"Thank you. Please continue to look after me as well."
"Yes. Next, this is a present for Sherry from me."
"Ah, thank you. I'll take good care of it Roxanne."

Sherry stands and receives some clothes from Roxanne.
Sherry seems to have reduced the amount of sake she drunk at the library.
I handle the work after dinner properly.
Sherry's kiss still smells a little of alcohol.

The next morning, after adventuring in Haruba's labyrinth, we deliver the tenth mirror.

"We should complete some frames for the mirrors soon."
"I see."
"Michio, have you known the broker Luke long?"

When I put the gold coin away in the item box, Gozer is there.

"Not really that long."
"He seems to be quite an excellent broker. I employed his father who was also a broker."
"You did?"

Luke's father was a broker?
For a broker, a connection with an order of knights and nobles is a lifeline.
It's understandable that he could inherit acquaintances.

"He's a broker I can trust. If I have work for you, is it alright to contact you through Luke?"

A broker as a middleman.

“Through Luke.”
“I hear that you live in Quratar, Michio. It’s difficult for me to go there, but Luke often has messengers here on errands.”

Ten mirrors might not be enough.
If they use them as gifts, they’ll need to replenish them.
They’d like to make contact whenever they have business.
So they’ll use Luke?

“If that’s alright, it’s fine with me.”

I okayed it and left Bode.

After breakfast, Sherry fuses a monster card.
I was a bit worried about her state after drinking sake, so I didn’t let her do it last night.
Would it be alright even if she was drunk?

Is there a chance to fail because of sake?
Since it’s a skill, does it matter?
If you get too drunk to use the incantation, the skill will fail to start.
It’s not something I need to forcefully try out.

“It worked.”

Without alcohol, of course it succeeded.

Rod of Offerings: Skill slots – 2xIntelect, empty, empty.

It’s a Rod of Offerings.
There are still two remaining empty skill slots as well.

“Great, as expected of Sherry.”
“Thank you.”

Sherry exhales greatly.
She still seems to be uneasy about fusing monster cards.
There were two monster cards at stake this time, so it can’t be helped.

Immediately, we went to Haruba's labyrinth to try it out.
First, a group of two NT Ant's and a Mino appeared.
I use a [Water storm].

Water magic is the ants weakness, and I use a second shot.
They are annihilated before they get to us.
I use a fireball on the remaining cow.
Roxanne dodges the mino's attack, and I use another fireball.

The demon falls.
Two water spells on the NT Ant Lv11, plus an additional two [Fire ball]'s on the Mino, so four spells total?
Mino was five before, and is now four.
Even if they say 2X, it doesn't seem to mean double damage.

Since the spell amount decreased, our hunting improved.
If I double it, it's eight for the demons on the 12th floor.
That should be enough.

We advanced quickly, and arrived at the boss room.
When you open the door, there's just another room with a door at the other side.
The standby room.

"Should we try the 12th floor today?"

The 11th floor boss is poked full of holes with Durandal.
It tried to use it's skill several times, but everything was cancelled.
After the boss, we set foot on the 12th floor.

"The demon on the 12th floor is the Grass Bee. It flies and shoots needles from a distance. You might get poisoned because there is poison in the needles."

Poison attack from a distance.
Seriously?

"As expected, the demon on the 12th floor is strong."
"It doesn't have magic resistance, and has a weakness to wind magic. That's

not just limited to Grass Bee, any flying demon seems to have a weakness to wind."

After the explanation from Sherry, Roxanne leads us to a place with a Grass Bee.
One huge bee is flying.
Is it the bee version of NT Ant?
It's body is black, and it's legs are yellow.

I use [Breeze storm] from a distance.
If I used a single target magic from this distance it would be avoided.
I could hit it if I let it get a bit closer, but it's the first time facing this type of demon so I want to attack as early as possible.

When the [Breeze storm] hit, the bee was tossed around, up, down, left & right very intensely.
It looks to be effective.
If it was a human, the brain would be shaken up.
It might not be that serious since it's a bee.

The second shot is the [Breeze ball].
The 3rd is used straight after.
The Grass Bee did not use it's distance attack as it approached.
It makes a strange buzzing sound as it approaches.

Roxanne takes the lead, and dodges a sword like dash from the bee.
Sherry thrusts her spear.
Because of Roxanne, I get a good chance and use another [Breeze ball].

The buzzing stops, and the bee falls.
It was hovering, and then suddenly fell with a crash.
A yellow leg is lying on the ground.

Four?
It's the same number as the demons on the 11th floor.
Demons on the 12th floor are twice as strong as demon on the lower floors, but wind magic is it's weakness and is twice as strong against it.

I only need to use wind magic on Haruba's 12th floor.
Four will be alright even if NT Ant appears.
It seems we can fight on Haruba's 12th floor.

Before long, the Grass Bee becomes smoke and disappears leaving Beeswax behind.

“It’s beeswax? Can you make candles from it?”
“If you sell it to the guild, craftsmen will turn it into candles. It’s not a very precious material, so the guild is the only place that really buys it.”

Sherry tells us.
There doesn’t seem to be a skill to make candles from beeswax.
They can still make them despite that.

“It is useful for maintenance on leather equipment. If you don’t mind, can I use some?”
“Sure.”
“Thank you.”

You use it just as wax?
Giving some to Roxanne will be good.
I put it in the item box for now, but I’m running out of space.

Now that I know we can fight here, that will do for today.
It’s time to visit the slave trader in the Imperial Capital.

“As I mentioned earlier, I’m going to the Imperial Capital. Do the two of you want to come as well?”
“Yes. I’ll come.”
“Um, is it alright?”

Sherry hesitated.

“It will be a new companion for the two of you, so I want to hear your opinions.”
“It’s alright, Sherry.”
“Oh, Roxanne was there when you met me. Please let me come as well then.”

Roxanne and Sherry will come along, so the three of us go to the adventurers guild in the Imperial Capital.
Towards the business of the slave trader.
I heard about the place from Alan.

There's a place surrounded by a wall.
An amazing building comes into view.
The gate is beautiful.
It seems they are quite profitable.

"This must be it."
"It looks like it."

Is the wall to prevent people from getting out?
The gate is opened, and we went in.
A man came out to meet us straight away.

"I have come by a referral, and I would like to speak to someone about a purchase."
"I understand. This way please."

I pass over the letter of introduction, and the man guides us into the building.
The man left us in a room near the entrance.

"Welcome, I am the master of this business."

After waiting a while, a different man comes to us.
He is a slave trader Lv6.

"I look forward to doing business with you."
"Come with me please."

The slave trader guides us to one of the back rooms.
I sit on the sofa, and three herbal teas are prepared.
Since I gave him a letter of introduction, there shouldn't be any misunderstanding about me selling Roxanne & Sherry.

"Thank you."

I drink a bit of the herbal tea.
If I consider that this place trades people, I can't trust them that much.
Though I shouldn't comment, since I've bought slaves.

“I saw the letter of introduction from Alan the slave trader in Vale, and that you’re looking for a master smith.”
“No, I no longer need a master smith.”
“Okay.”

The slave trader looks at Sherry for a moment.
You can tell she is a dwarf just by looking.
I am not selling her.

“I’m looking for a woman who can fight in the labyrinth.”
“A combat slave, an adventurer, or explorer?”
“And someone who can speak Brahim.”

Young and beautiful would be good, but I won’t say that.

“In the Imperial Capital, a beautiful female combat slave is in high demand because there are a lot of people who explore labyrinths in the capital. We have prepared a lot of them, so surely we can find one that is to your satisfaction.”
“I hope so.”
“Lets go to their room for a look then. If there is any you are interested in then you can have a talk with them.”

He seems to have realized even if I didn’t say it.
Are they sorted by looks?

“I understand.”

I follow the slave trader to the third floor.
Roxanne and Sherry can come along since it’s the room for females.

“The second floor has women who are older, or not suited for combat. If you are interested we can have a look through there afterwards.”
“That probably won’t be necessary.”

There is a sign for war potential on the framework. I hope they aren’t recommending something strange.
The slave trader went in, I looked to Sherry and then went into the room.

“An explorer is looking for party members. Will everyone that understands Brahim please line up here.”

The slave trader arranges the slaves.
There’s about ten people.
It’s not really much.

There are people with no motivation, and some interested, with various different expressions.
All the members seem better than the unmotivated ones in Vale.
It must be true that there is a lot of demand for combat slaves in the Imperial Capital.

Even so, it’s over quickly because there is only a few.
Is a woman with a nice face, or a motivated face better?

We cross the room, and are guided to the next room.
As expected, there are more than ten people.
They spread them out instead of packing them into one room.

There isn’t anyone extremely beautiful in the next room.
We went around other rooms, and there wasn’t any there either.
Is it impossible for me to expect the same level as Roxanne and Sherry?
I’ll have to compromise a bit.

“Is that all?”
“The following room has people without any experience with men. They are a bit expensive for a combat slave.”
“That’s alright.”

They had a category like that.
The ones that understand brahim arrange themselves.
There is one beautiful woman in this room, but she is obviously unmotivated.
They don’t want to look at me.

I see.
They are the ones aiming for a wealthy man like Sherry mentioned.
They know they are beautiful.
If they have good looks, they can lead their master around by the nose.

It’s troublesome and dangerous to go into the labyrinth, and they want to avoid it.
Beautiful women are aiming for rich men.
A woman aiming for a rich man can’t aim to be a combat slave?
Roxanne and Sherry are beautiful, and wanted to be combat slaves.

If I bought them, would they fight?
Would they help our war potential?

“On to the next room.”
“Ok.”

We enter the next room.
Some women line up.
After they have lined up, a cat girl who stood up late lines up.

Ah, she’s beautiful.

Chapter 82 - Miria

“xxxxxxxxxx”
The catgirl, who stood up lastly, is told something and sent away.
So cute!

Miria | Female | 15 years old
Diver Lv2 (TN: It literally means ‘female diver’ but I have changed it to just ‘diver.’)

Miria huh?
She didn’t stand up because she’s not willing to?
Or because she’s not suited for combat?

“Why was she sent away?”
“It was Bana language.”

Roxanne says when I mumble to myself.

“Bana language?”
“Yes. It’s the language spoken by beastkin tribes inhabiting middle-eastern part of the Empire.”
“I see. So she doesn’t speak Brahim language?”

When the slave merchant entered the room, he asked for those who understand Brahim to line up.
Miria didn’t understand what he said but she still stood up because everyone was doing so.
She read the mood.

As a Japanese, I believe that it’s important to be able to read the mood.
Until now, there was no one who was sent away like that.
No one was sent away like that probably because they didn’t stand up if they didn’t understand Brahim.

I won’t give punishment to a slave, who doesn’t understand Brahim, for not obeying an order which was given in Brahim.
If I were to, the slave would follow other people out of fear of punishment.

This slave merchant and I probably don't think alike.
Apparently, a slave is not supposed to be so close to their master that they act on their own discretion.
An order has to be issued in clear words.

I wonder if I should issue clear orders to Roxanne and Sherry as well.
I must thank Roxanne for doing it in my stead.
Whenever I visit slave trading house, I get to know how lacking I am.

"I apologize that she stood up needlessly."
"It's alright."
"Then please, have a look."

I follow the slave merchant and check them all out.
Not one of them was outstanding.
Miria was the cutest of all.
And not just in this room, in the entire building.

Actually, the second one in the previous room, who wanted a rich owner, was the best in the entire building.
But that's only a matter of opinion.

"Roxanne, can you speak Bana?"
"Yes. Where I was brought up, Bana was spoken there."
"And Sherry?"
"I can't."

So Roxanne can speak Bana because her tribe is one of beastkin tribes?
Can a wolfkin really live together with a catkin?

Small triangular ears atop Miria's head are standing erect.
Same as the amber merchant from before.
She has to be a catgirl.

"She's from catkin tribe, right?"
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"xxxxxxxxxx"

When I voice my question, Roxanne says something to Miria who says something in return.

What are they talking about?
Roxanne looks at me hesitatingly.

“Yes?”
“Umm… she wants to eat fish.”
“Fish?”
“xxxxxxxxxx”

Upon my affirmation, Roxanne says something to Miria.
In my opinion, there should be no problem for a catgirl to fit into our party.
Does this tribe like to eat fish?

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She says that she would be willing to join us if she gets to eat fish.”
“Fish huh?”

Do they really like fish that much?
Do people of catkin tribe like to eat fish?
No wonder she has Diver job. It’s my first time seeing this job.

“Would you like to buy her?”
“Can I have an interview with her first?”
“But she doesn’t understand Brahim. She was found guilty of a crime and was, therefore, sold into slavery as punishment.”
“So I can’t buy her?”
“Not at all. If you want to, you can.”

He had an annoyed look on his face for a moment but I didn’t let it go unnoticed.
Is Miria perhaps a bargain?
Or is this all an act of the slave merchant?

Now that I have checked everyone out, it’s time for interview.
I have selected three of them.

First one is the woman I saw in the first room. She looks decent and seems willing as well.
I finish interview with her. She’s neither good nor bad.
Not bad at all.

Second one is extremely beautiful but she prefers a rich owner.
She doesn't seem to be willing to join my party.
She answers all my questions with no expression whatsoever.

Third is Miria.
She enters upon the slave merchant's call.
Her height is more than Sherry's but lower than Roxanne's.
About 150 centimeters.

Slim and slender.
Moderate chest. Neither modest, nor big.
Earlier, her hair seemed black but it's bluish.
It's dark blue- no, dark navy blue.

Slightly round face. Cute!
Round eyes.
Cat-ears atop her head.

Hair on the outside of her ears is blackish blue, like hair on her head. Hair on the inner side of her ears, however, is white.
Soft ears covered in hair.
I so wanna play with her ears!

"Roxanne, can you be the interpreter?
"Please leave it to me."

I start her interview with Roxanne as interpreter.

"First, let's talk about fish. How frequently would you like to eat fish?"
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Once every three- no, five days."

I was of the idea that it would be daily but it's not. That's a relief.
I have no idea how much fish is eaten normally in this world.
There's a fishmonger in Quratar, so procuring it won't be a problem.
Yet I have never seen Roxanne and Sherry cooking fish.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"She says that she would be fine with once in ten days."

Oh, she has relaxed her demands.
Miria is looking at me with expectant eyes.

“Are you fine with it, Roxanne, Sherry?”
“I don’t dislike fish.”
“I’m fine with it.”

I’ll try meuniere sometime, I guess.
It’s too late for me to say that I don’t like fish.

“There’s no issue with fish.”

I nod to Miria in affirmation.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“We can sprinkle a little oil and grill as is; or we can make meuniere by dredging it in flour, so that its moisture doesn’t escape; or we can saute it in olive oil; or we can fry it in olive oil and wine; or we can simply boil it with salt and fish sauce. It sounds simple but tastes great.”

So tempting!
When Roxanne translates it, Miria leans forward.
With eager eyes.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She says that she wants you to be her master.”

Just like that?

“Can she cook?”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Yes, ‘leave it to me,’ she says.”

Restaurants and convenience stores are not common in this world.
There are not many people here who love to dine out.

“It’ll be troublesome if she cooks fish everyday.”
“xxxxxxxxxx”

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She understands.”

Well, I can simply not have Miria cook everyday.

“Does she have any issue with fighting in labyrinth?”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She seemed to have taken out a fishkin in a labyrinth.”

Does she have anything to say other than ‘fish?’

“Brahim… if she doesn’t learn it, there’ll be no fish for her.”
“xxxxxxxxxx”

No, don’t translate that! No!
When Roxanne translates it, Miria glares at me like I’m her enemy.
Well, she seems ready for labyrinth at least.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Umm… I have convinced her that master is not a bad person.”

Roxanne seems to have followed up.

“So, have you decided?”

After Miria regains her calm, the slave merchant gestures me wrap it up.
After I acknowledge, he takes Miria and leaves the room.
It was considerate of him to leave the room.

There are only three of us in the room now.
I ask Roxanne and Sherry for their opinion.

“So, what do you think about those three?”
“Second one is unreliable. She will only hold us back in labyrinth.”
“I know, right?”

Roxanne is talking about that woman who was beautiful but unwilling.
I agree with her opinion.

"…In regard to chest… I will drop further down the order."

Says Sherry. There's a famous saying, 'flat is justice,' don't you know?
You should not compare yourself with your fellow party members.
You should have more confidence in yourself.
Although I'm thinking so, I'm afraid to say that out loud.

"First one isn't bad."
"But not good either."

Ignoring what Sherry said, Roxanne continues.

"Umm… master, which one do you like?"
"Well, Roxanne and Sherry are already beautiful enough. I just want someone who won't cause trouble for me."
"Th-Thank you, master. Third one is good. The one from catkin tribe."
"Why catkin tribe?"

Roxanne's facial expression turns strange

"T-Those of catkin tribe don't stick to their partners all the time. Therefore, it would be enough if you play with her for a short period of time everyday."

In other words, even if Miria becomes my slave, I won't be able to spend much time with her?
And Roxanne will have the opportunity to monopolize me?
Roxanne's line of thinking is odd.

"In any case, I won't ever ignore you, Roxanne."
"Th-Thank you. She's not as good at fighting in party as fishing. We will have to teach her that."
"So, are both of you fine with her?"
"Yes. I have no problem. Leave interpretation to me."

If Roxanne has no problem, there's no problem.
The slave merchant comes back after a while.

“So, have you made your decision?”
“Can you please tell me the prices of the three?”
“First one is valued at 200,000 Nar. It’s a bargain price if you ask me.”
“Oh, is it?”

It’s cheaper than I expected.
Although she’s not exceptional, this price makes the deal worth it.
Or Roxanne and Sherry are extraordinarily exceptional, perhaps that’s why I have set the bar high?

“But she doesn’t have any specialty. Second one is priced at 500,000 Nar. Since you were introduced by a fellow of mine, however, I’ll give you a discounted price of 450,000 Nar. No man can refuse such an outstandingly beautiful woman.”

Because she’s beautiful, her price is sky high.
However, he discounted the price by 50,000 Nar just like that. There doesn’t seem to be any market price.

“It’s too much.”
“Third one, with the level of talent she has, could easily go for 600,000 to 700,000 Nar in auction if she knew Brahim. But she doesn’t, therefore, she is available for 450,000 Nar.”

Is there an auction for slaves?
So, is that why he seemed annoyed back then? Because he can sell her later in auction for much higher?

“But there’s no guarantee that she will fetch high price in auction. And then there’s her food expense.”
“It’s included in the price.”
“But it’ll take time and effort to teach her Brahim.”
“This is exactly why her price has been lowered to 450,000 Nar.”

The slave merchant shakes his head.

“Is she in her first year of slavery?”
“Of course.”

He nods with confidence this time.
I don't want to buy leftover goods.
The discount is not in respect of clearing obsolete stock, it seems.

Would he really discount her price this much merely due to language?
Now that I think about it, the slave merchant said that she was found guilty.

"You mentioned earlier that she was found guilty of a crime."
"She was caught fishing in the territory of a temple. Her village, in consultation with the temple, sold her off into slavery. It's believed that the divine punishment will only subside when she becomes property of someone else."

The slave merchant tells the story.
Did she step into some god's sanctuary?
It sounds similar to the story of a greedy person who fished in the territory of Ise Grand Shrine.
A greedy person huh?

Divine punishment is feared even in this world, it seems.
And a person who has incurred divine punishment seems to be unwelcomed.
So, is this her demerit?

"Divine punishment…"
"She probably didn't know that the area was restricted. It doesn't necessarily mean that she has a habit of stealing."
"But to pay such a high price only to share divine punishment with her."
"Not at all. Why would you share her punishment? Okay, I'll lower the price to 400,000 Nar. I won't lower it any further than this."

The slave merchant lowers her price even more.
Is this the final price?
If he were confident in selling her for high in auction, he wouldn't have lowered her price like this.
Actually, considering her background, there's no guarantee that he can sell her at all. Now that he has the opportunity to sell her, he must be trying his hardest to avail it.

"Okay, I have made my decision. I'll buy Miria."
"Thank you for business."

“I want to change my will as well. Sherry will be free upon my death, so I want her to inherit Miria.”

Death penalty is a painful way to die.
It existed in Edo period too.
Disembowelment, crucifixion, beheading, saw mill.
It’s not an easy death.

By default, if a master were to die, their slave would die as well. However, if a slave murders their master, they would receive death penalty.
If Miria kills me, she will not die by default. She will be inherited to Sherry and then receive death penalty.
This is only a contingency plan however.

“Changing the will costs 300 Nar.”
“Doesn’t matter.”
“Well then, the total amount to pay is 280,210 Nar.”

Although he said earlier that he can’t lower it any further, he lowers it in the end.
A merchant can’t be trusted after all.

Chapter 83 - Fishmonger

“It was splendidly negotiated.”
Sherry compliments me upon leaving the room. After I paid the amount, I was asked by the slave merchant to wait outside.
She doesn’t seem to mind using underhanded methods against brokers.
Sherry is nasty when it comes to negotiation.

“It was? Thank you.”
“However, I still don’t understand why the slave merchant lowered the price further without any apparent reason.”

…Err
Because of 30% discount.

“As you would expect from master. He could see master’s virtue.”
“Thank you but I’m not exactly a man of virtue.”

Really, I’m not virtuous. I can lay with you right here, Roxanne.
If skill could be considered same as virtue, then I might be virtuous.
From a third person’s viewpoint, I may be a skilled merchant to be able to get the price down by 30%.

“Not at all. It was splendid.”
“She seemed to have violated god’s sanctuary but it won’t be a problem.”
“If master says so.”
“Divine punishment is only superstition. Had it existed, she would have received it when she was fishing in the restricted area.”

Sherry is rational after all.
Roxanne nods as well upon hearing it.
After a while, the slave merchant comes back with Miria.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“‘Thank you very much for fish,’ she says.”

Really? But I have yet to give her fish.
So tonight’s dinner has already been decided?
She seems to be skilled at negotiation.

“Not now.”
“xxxxxxxxxx”

She glares at me when Roxanne translates it.
Did I ever say that I won’t give her fish?

“Then I’ll rewrite the Intelligence Cards.”

I extend my hand out upon the slave merchant’s instruction.
Miria is told something as well. She reluctantly extends her hand out.
Finally, after Sherry extends her hand out, the slave merchant rewrites the Intelligence Cards.

Kaga Michio | Male | 17 years old | Explorer | Free
Owned slaves : Roxanne | Sherry (to be free upon death) | Miria (to be inherited upon death)

After our Intelligence Cards get rewritten, Miria appears in the list of my slaves.
After my death, she will be inherited.
It doesn’t mention, however, whom she’ll be inherited to.

I receive Miria and leave the building.
As I expected, Miria is barefoot.
When we come out of the building, I pass leather shoes to her.

“Well then, put these on.”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She says that she’s sorry for receiving these shoes in addition to fish.”

In other words, she wants fish.

“It’s also for use as equipment in labyrinth.”

When Roxanne translates it, she accepts the shoes and put them on.
I add her to my party and return home via the Imperial capital’s adventurer guild.
Immediately upon arriving at home, Roxanne explains something to Miria.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She says that it’s unbelievable for an explorer to do that.”

Were they talking about Warp?

“Explain it to her and tell her that it’s confidential.”
“Understood.”

Because it’s bothersome, I leave it to Roxanne.
When Miria listens to Roxanne’s explanation, her expression turns respectful.
Exactly what Roxanne explained to her remains unknown.

Whatever, it’s not like I mind being respected.
Because I know how scary she can be at times.

“Once again, I am your master, Michio. I’ll be in your care from now on.”

I put my hand on Miria’s head.
After confirming that there was no resistance, I start to caress it.
I play with her cat-ears for a bit.
So soft!

I was of the idea that they would be more stiff but they’re not.
There’s a cushion of soft, white hair inside her ears.
This fluffy feeling is a bliss.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She says that it felt good.”
“Tell her to say ‘yes’ in Brahim language.”
“…Yes.”

When Roxanne translates it, Miria tries to say it.

“Oh, you said it properly.”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“That’s great.”

Roxanne, Sherry and I appreciate her effort.
“People don’t do things unless you perform it, tell them how to do it, get them to do it, and praise them.”
— Yamamoto Isoroku

“Yes.”

Miria looks bashfully happy.
Hopefully, we can teach her Brahim words one by one.

“She’s Roxanne. She will take care of interpretation. Treat her like your sister.”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Yes.”

When Roxanne translates it, Miria bows to Roxanne.
I wonder if she translated it as I intended.

“Okay then, try to say ‘sister’.”

I try to teach Miria one more word.
Sister.
If she successfully says ‘sister,’ then next will be…

Fufufufu
The excitement from a cute catgirl calling you ‘brother’ is something totally else.
Nothing comes even close.

“…Sister.”
“Yes, Miria.”

Alright, that was good.
And now…
When I was about to teach her next word, Sherry looks at me with despising eyes.
Why?

No, it must be my imagination.
It has to be my imagination.

It was undoubtedly my imagination.
I'm becoming paranoid.

"Sh-She is Sherry. We four are the only members of the party for now. We'll have more party members with time."

Damn it!
What's wrong with me?

Well, at the very least, I have made it clear that I'll be expanding my harem in time to come.
Well begun is half done.
Iron must be hit when it's hot.
It's better to inform her of this before she gets attached to me.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"She says that she had a younger brother, so she'll do just fine."

Miria sticks her chest out proudly.
There's no need to drag your brother into it.

"Let's talk about job then. Is there any particular job you want when you enter labyrinth?"

While asking that of Miria, I open Party Job Settings interface.

Diver Lv2, Villager Lv5, Merchant Lv1, Explorer Lv1, Warrior Lv1, Pirate Lv1.

None of the jobs are high level.
She most probably acquired Pirate job by fishing in the restricted area.
Do beastkin become pirate instead of thief?

"She says that It's good as it is."
"Diver?"

Well, she obviously won't say that she wants to be a 'pirate king.'

“The guild contracts with you which requires you to keep Diver job for at least ten years after you become a diver.”
“Really?”

I try to change her job to Villager Lv5.
I can’t change it.
Ah, I see.

“She says that she will become a pirate if she tries to change her job.”

When I close the Party Job Settings interface and use Appraisal, she was Pirate Lv1.
I open Party Job Settings interface again in a hurry.

…
Thank goodness.
I was able to change her job back to Diver Lv2 successfully.
I close the Party Job Settings interface and check her job again. It’s Diver Lv2.

As an experiment, I try to change her job to Warrior Lv1.
Success.
She doesn’t become pirate.

“Apparently, the contract is no longer in place.”

Roxanne translates that I have changed her job and that the contract no longer exists.
She doesn’t get that I can change jobs using Job Settings option.

If I say that it’s normal, will it be considered normal?
Of course not.
She obviously won’t get it.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Is it divine punishment?”

Miria says something anxiously to Roxanne and she translates.
No.
It was I who did that.

“N-No, it’s not divine punishment. I-It’s something that I did.”
“Can you do something like that?”

When I deny it in a flurry, Roxanne looks at me with eyes full of respect.
When Roxanne translates it, even Miria looks at me with respect.
They seem to have totally misunderstood it.

Well, I have done it now.
And I can’t undo it.
It can’t be helped.

“Sherry, what kind of job this Diver is?”
“It’s a racial job for females of catkin tribe. They display strong offensive ability against aquatic monsters.”

Diver Lv2
Effects: Medium Increase in Stamina | Small Increase in HP | Small Increase in Strength
Skill: Anti-Aquatic Enhancement

Diver job has a skill called Anti-Aquatic Enhancement.
Is this the reason why they display strong offensive ability against aquatic monsters?
It’s probably a passive skill.

Should I leave her job to Diver?
It may come in handy against aquatic monsters.

“What type of weapon do you use?”
“She says that she uses spear to catch fish.”

Spear?
Is it perhaps harpoon, not spear?

“Can she use spear in labyrinth? Also, is it alright for two vanguards to use spear, Roxanne?”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“If you want her to be attack-oriented, she can use a two-handed sword. If

you want her to be defense-oriented, she can use a one-handed sword and a shield."

Roxanne says after discussing it with Miria.
Should I have her use both a sword and a shield?
I'm the main damage-dealer anyway.

"Then let's go with a one-handed sword and a shield. Can she make do with dagger for now?"
"Yes, it'll suffice."

Because Roxanne has approved of the idea, I go to get a dagger.
I didn't put it in my Item Box. It's the same dagger, with an empty skill slot, which Sherry made earlier.
30% discount is not effective on purchase of single item.
For the time being, this dagger will do the job.

I come back from the storeroom with the dagger and hand it to Miria.
Miria says 'okay,' and receives it.

"What about armor? Leather cap and leather gloves will be enough, I believe, but I'm not sure about leather armor."

Because it was not enough against Green Caterpillars Lv11, we had to upgrade it.
It's even less likely an option for Miria whose level is low.

"Leather jacket will suffice."

Yes, but only for Roxanne.

"She'll need a few things, for she has only just started. Let's go to the armor shop first. If there's anything else you need, let's buy that as well."
"Understood."

I jump to Quratar's adventurer guild.
Miria is still surprised, so I leave her in Roxanne's care.
I don't use incantation either when I use Warp from inside home.
Miria doesn't fuss about it outside however.

We head to the armor shop in the centre of the town. On the way, Miria stares fixedly at fishmonger.
She just can't be helped.

Even though I say fishmonger, not many fish can be seen there.
There seem to be only three or four kinds, including carp and salmon.
They are fresh-water fish, so they must be from somewhere nearby.
Quratar is far away from sea, so there are no sea-water fish.

"xxxxxxxxxx"

When we pass by the fishmonger, the wind carries Miria's murmur to my ear.
I thought that I wouldn't be able to budge her from there but she obediently follows us along.

"What were you saying?"
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Snakehead, Rock Sole, Baiji. These are the names of the fish at the fishmonger."
Roxanne says after confirming with Miria.
Names of the fish?
As you would expect from Miria, she knows them all.

"We will buy fish after this."

When Roxanne translates it, Miria looks at me with wide, round eyes.
Eyes filled with surprise, joy and hope.

"Yes!"

She replies vigorously.
Do you know where we are going?

When Roxanne chides her, she returns to normal.
She doesn't know after all.
Miria lines up next to Roxanne.
Roxanne is explaining something to Miria.

“What is she telling her?”
“Formation, most probably.”

Because there was no end to the explanation in sight, I ask Sherry.

“Formation?”
“Yes. Until now, Roxanne and I used to take front-back or left-right position in order to guard you. But we have one more now.”

So, is this why they didn’t use to rush out and stuck close to their positions?
Was that their formation?
I never noticed it.

“Really? I’m so pathetic. Thank you and Roxanne too.”
“Not al all. It’s our duty.”

Of course they’ll guard me.
They’ll guard me unless I order them not to.
Because I didn’t give any instruction, Roxanne came up with it herself.
I’m such an incompetent master.

When we arrive at the armor shop, I first pick a shield.
I choose iron shield, which is next after wooden shield, for Roxanne.
There are two empty skill slots on it.
It’s not much heavier than wooden shield probably because it’s small and thin.

“Which one would you like to have, Miria? Hard leather jacket or chainmail?”

After choosing iron shield for Roxanne, I ask Miria.

“As long as I don’t have to catch fish, I’m fine with chainmail.”

She can’t swim with chainmail on, of course.
I pick some chainmails with empty skill slots.
The moment I ask Miria to choose, she immediately points her finger at one.

“Is this one that good?”
“The quicker we are done with this, the sooner I can get fish.”

So fish is more important to her than armor?
Well, all these chainmails are essentially same.
Therefore, you don't have to scold her for this, Roxanne.

After buying the iron shield and the chainmail, we leave the armor shop.
Miria picks her clothes and other items of her use without wasting any moment.
Shopping with Miria is so easy.
I'm not sure, however, if it'll be same at the fishmonger.

"Is roasted white fish alright, Miria?"

I ask her before deciding what to make.
When Roxanne translates it, Miria nods to me happily.

"It seems to be alright."
"Roxanne, Sherry, choose one item each beside roasted fish for dinner."
"I'll make soup then."
"I'll stir-fry something."

Roxanne will make soup and Sherry will make stir-fried food.
It's Miria's first day. We have to make it memorable.
Miria looks at me with burning eyes.
Has she fallen in love with me already?

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"She wants to thank you for fish."

I figured that much myself.
After buying clothes, items of daily use and a magic crystal, we finally buy fish from the fishmonger.
Miria sticks close to me all the while.
I receive the white fish from the explorer uncle.

By the way, I have finally found out why there's a fishmonger in Quratar.
White fish is a dropped item.
Some monster from some higher floor seems to drop it.

Because it's a dropped item, it can be carried in Item Box.
It's a good part-time work for a retired explorer.

Because the man at counter of the shop is a merchant, 30% discount is effective.
Sourcing, rather than selling, seems to be the main part of the fishmonger's business.

"Miria, can you fillet the fish?"
"'Leave it to me,' she says."

Uh-huh
Because she stuck her chest out proudly, I knew the answer before Roxanne translated it.
I knew she could do it.
I only ever bought it from supermarket, so I don't know how to fillet it.
Well, I don't have to worry about procuring fish at least, for there's a fishmonger in Quratar.

Chapter 84 - Tapetum

After buying ingredients for dinner, we return home.
I start heating the bath.

Well begun is half done.
Miria became a slave as punishment for violating god's sanctuary. She didn't explicitly consent to becoming a sex slave.
In this respect, she's different from Roxanne and Sherry.
This will be a make or break moment.

If the worst comes to the worst, I'll just use fish as bait.
Forcing her into it, however, is the last resort.
If possible, I want her to consent to it.

And to do that, we'll first have to take bath together.
One step at a time.
Taking a bath together won't be a problem for she can't deny her master's order to wash his back.
After that, we'll have all the time.

It's fine, right?
Yes, as long as I don't force her.
Bed has been laid.
What's left is to unravel the buttons.

I can't endure anymore.
It's fine, right? Yes, it is.

"xxxxxxxxxx"

Miria starts making a fuss all of a sudden.
I shrug in confusion and go out to see what the matter is.
Roxanne is explaining something to her.
Because I was using water type magic to fill the tub, is that what the ruckus was about?

Was she surprised?
Or did she hear what I was thinking in the bathroom?

“She says that it’s really amazing that you can also use magic.”

Miria looks at me with respect.
Phew
She didn’t hear my thoughts. That’s a relief.
Miria has been making a fuss for a while but she seems to be convinced now.
The matter has been resolved without my intervention.
I’m grateful to whomever came up with the idea of delegating work.

After having used magic several times, I head to the kitchen.
Miria was there in the kitchen with Roxanne.

“It’s a pot. Pot.”
“Pot.”

She seems to be learning Brahim language at her pace.
I’m impressed.

“Roxanne, are you having any difficulty?”
“Not at all.”
“Miria is doing great.”

I pat the heads of the two and incidentally stroke their ears.
Dog-ears and cat-ears.
Roxanne’s lop ears are lovely. Miria’s erect cat-ears, on the other hand, are cute.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She says that she won’t eat fish if she doesn’t learn a new Brahim word.”

I didn’t mean it when I said that.
Oh well, it’s not like it’s bad.

“She won’t? By the way, can you help me with labyrinth?”
“Certainly.”
“Would Miria like to go too?”
“That’s a good idea.”

Roxanne says something to Miria.
Miria nods.
She seems to be willing.
Let's go then.

"I'll stay here to keep watch."

Because Sherry intends to stay at home, I pass equipment to Roxanne and Miria.
Chainmail, leather hat, leather gloves, iron shield and wooden shield.
Although there's only one iron shield and one wooden shield, they're occupying two separate slots in my Item Box.
Was buying iron shield not a good decision?
Or should I discard wooden shield and buy one more iron shield?
Because I have used gold coins to purchase Miria, one slot has been freed up.

"Miria, you have to just observe for now. You don't have to take part."

After telling that to Miria, I take them to Haruba's labyrinth.

"I can smell Minos from there. The smell is dense, however, which means there are more than one. About three, to be specific."
"Let's head there."

Under Roxanne's guidance, we proceed on 11th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

Because it takes time to find monsters, it's inefficient to look for lone monsters.
Since Sherry isn't here this time and Miria is only observing, a group of four is out of question.
NT Ant is not an option either for Sherry has Antidote with her.
It's selfish of me to make so many demands.

Minos or Escape Goats in a group of two to three will be perfect.
It's a vague and selfish request but I can't help it.
I'm really grateful to Roxanne.

We hunt a group of three Minos.
I start off with a Rush attack on first Mino. After I dodge second Mino's body

slam, I take first one out with another attack.
Roxanne is holding third Mino, dodging its attacks by a hair's breadth, attacking it all the while.

"xxxxxxxxxx"

After we take all three monsters out, Miria says something to Roxanne.
From her expression, she looks excited.
She is most probably impressed by Roxanne's ability to dodge.
I can understand that much from the respectful expression she has on her face toward Roxanne.

Well, I dodged a Mino's attack as well.

If you get to see Roxanne dodge, however, you can't help but be in awe.
That said, you need to be apt at fighting to be able to appreciate Roxanne's prowess. I look forward to Miria's prospect.
It is I, however, who takes the monsters out.

But I have no power of my own.
Credit is due to Durandal.
I will not admit defeat however.

"Can I ask of you once more?"
"Certainly."

My MP is not fully recovered yet, so I decide to hunt some more.

"xxxxxxxxxx"

On our way to next monster, Miria says something.
She points at the turn ahead.

Magic Crystal

It's a magic crystal.
When I use Appraisal in the direction where she was pointing, I find a magic crystal there.

“Fish savings? Yes, it seems to be there.”
“It’s magic crystal. Well done, Miria.”

Empty magic crystal is black, so it’s often neglected in the dark of labyrinth.
I found one after a long while.
According to what Sherry said, magic crystals are found more on higher floors.
There was no need to buy one earlier.

“Her parents told her that she can eat fish if she collects it from labyrinth. Therefore, she calls it fish savings.”

Miria says and Roxanne translates.
So her whole family is genuine fish-lovers.

“I see. So you can find it. That’s great, Miria.”
“Miria can also see perfectly in the dark.”

Miria proudly sticks her chest out.
Cats have a reflective layer in their eyes, Tapetum, which reflects light back through retina.
This is the reason why their eyes are sharp and glow in the dark.
I wonder if people of catkin tribe possess Tapetum too.

So the reason I don’t find magic crystals in labyrinth is because her kind have swept them all?
It is impossible for me to find a black crystal in a dark labyrinth unless I use Appraisal.
Miria, on the other hand, found one before even turning around the corner.
If other parties include catkin, it makes sense that we don’t find magic crystals often.

“Is that so?”

I receive the magic crystal, recover my MP and return home.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”

When we arrive at home, Roxanne and Miria start talking about something.
Roxanne moves exaggeratedly and explains something.
She waves her body several times while explaining.

She's probably teaching her how to dodge.
I don't think Roxanne's lecture will help her in any way however.
As a fellow ordinary person, I empathize with Miria.

Eh?
This is strange.

Miria is listening to her explanation eagerly.
She imitates Roxanne and waves her body.
Roxanne's lecture seems to be effective.

"Miria is suited to be a warrior."

Roxanne seems satisfied with Miria's effort.

"S-She is?"

Is Miria perhaps not a fellow ordinary person but Roxanne's fellow?
All beastkin seem to be so.
But they can't express themselves fully because they don't speak Brahim.

I divert my eyes from them and look at Sherry. She has same look on her face as me.
Sherry is puzzled.
She is a fellow ordinary person.
I entrust the two to Sherry and head back to the bathroom.

I heat the bath again.
Now that the bath has been heated, it's time for lemon to do its job.

I leave a lemon to float in the bath, grab two more and move to the kitchen.
I take a peek at the soup that Roxanne is making.

"Yes?"
"It doesn't seem to be seasoned yet. Can I have a little?"
"Certainly."

Roxanne's soup is in the stage of boiling meat and vegetables together.
At this point, it looks similar to bouillon.

"I want you to tell Miria to squeeze these lemons. Is it alright?"
"It's alright."

Roxanne translates it to Miria.
There doesn't seem to be any instrument here to squeeze lemons, so you have to do it with bare hands.
My hands feel sore by just imagining it.

"Squeeze- fish- apply- tasty- okay?"

I hand the lemons to Miria and tell her in broken Brahim.

"Okay."
"S-q-u-e-e-z-e."
"…Squeeze."

Roxanne translates, I nod and Miria repeats.

"F-i-s-h."
"Fish."

Shouldn't she already be familiar with how to say fish?

"A-p-p-l-y."
"Apply."
"T-a-s-t-y."
"Tasty."

She seems to be learning quickly.
I'll let her taste what tasty is. This way, she will learn what tasty really means.
Because my words get automatically translated into Brahim, I don't know how difficult it is.

Sherry's eyes look scary.

I add the lemon juice, which I received from Miria, and wine to the bouillon, which I received from Roxanne, and leave it to simmer after sprinkling some salt and pepper.
Afterwards, I apply flour to white fish meat and roast it in olive oil, and present it with lemon sauce.
Miria was staring fixedly while I was roasting the fish.

“Roast fish.”
“Roast fish.”
“Eat fish.”
“Eat fish.”

I take the opportunity and teach her more Brahim words.
Words related to fish must be easy to remember for her.

“I want to eat fish.”
“I want to eat fish.”
“When I eat fish, I’m happy.”
“When I eat fish, I’m happy.”

I feel like I’m learning Brahim myself in the process.
Was the sentence structure really like this?

After dinner was ready, I line it up on the table.
Miria sits by Roxanne’s side.
It’s natural because she does interpretation for her.

To Roxanne’s other side is Sherry.
Three people on that side while I’m all alone on this side.
Even though we have one more person now, I’m still lonely.

“W-What?”

When I was sulking, Miria stares at me.

“She probably wants to eat right away.”
“She does?”

I distribute the soup upon Roxanne's indication.
When I ask Miria as to what she would like to eat, she jumps at meuniere.
She's not good at using knife. She immediately stuffs it into her mouth.

"Tasty!"

I appreciate her for using the Brahim word which I taught her earlier.
I'm glad.

However, is it the fish that's tasty or the dish?
Miria would find any fish tasty. What about the dish?
Actually, it might indeed be the fish that's tasty.

I take some meuniere to try it myself.
Hmm… it tastes great.
It seems to be a success.
It's safe to assume that she called the dish tasty.

"Now that I think about it, did you use to eat raw fish?"
"Umm… master, beastkin are different from beasts."

I was meaning to ask if there's a thing like sashimi in this world but I get reproved by Roxanne.
It was a needless thing to ask.
Beasts would eat it raw, not beastkin.

"My bad. I didn't mean it that way."
"Not at all. I'm sorry for interrupting you."

There's a risk of parasites if you eat raw fish.
But I'm not sure if it's same for white fish meat dropped by monsters.
Whatever, there's neither soy sauce nor wasabi here. What good sashimi is without those?

Miria is stuffing meuniere into her mouth like crazy.
Shortly afterwards, she has her shoulders drooped and head hung.
It doesn't seem to be a compliment.

"Do you not want to eat?"
"Eat."

When I hold my platter out to her, she snatches it immediately.
She doesn't seem to be modest when it comes to fish.
She stuffs the fish in her mouth with a joyful expression.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"She says that she's happy that master bought her."

Ah, so it was that.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"She says that she would serve master for the rest of her life."

It's not gratitude but more like a debt due to providing her a place to live and food to eat.

After that, Miria receives some fish from Roxanne and Sherry as well.
Although I said 'receives', it was more like 'snatches.'
I can see the desire for fish burning in her eyes.
Roxanne reprimands her initially but gives her the fish in the end.

"Have you eaten enough?"

When the fish was all gone, I ask Miria.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"She says that she had never thought she would be able to eat this much fish."
"Is that so?"

Four pieces, to be specific.

"Miria says that she will do the dishes. Well, I'll do maintenance of equipment then."
"Okay. When all of you are done, we will take bath."

I take beeswax out of my Item Box and pass it to Roxanne.
I casually take a look at Miria.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Okay, sister."

When Roxanne says something to Miria, she immediately gets on her feet with a plate in her hands.
She starts to pick other plates up from the table.

What about bath?
Do you want to go together with us or not?
Which is it?
Yes or no?

“Plate.”
“Plate.”
“Knife.”
“Knife.”

While handing Miria the tableware, I teach her more Brahim words.
I don’t understand.
Did Roxanne tell her that we will take bath or not?

They were talking for long, so they must have talked about bath.
Or perhaps she was just explaining details of dishwashing to her?

“Wash.”
“Wash.”
“Dishwash.”
“Dishwash.”
“Later, Miria wash.”
“?”

It didn’t go through.
Did it not go through or did she refuse?

“xxxxxxxxxx”

When Roxanne translates it, Miria immediately leaves the dining table.
No? Yes? Which is it?
While I was having Sherry perform smithing, my mind was restless.

“xxxxxxxxxx”

Miria comes back shortly after.
She says something to Roxanne and looks toward me.
So bath is no good?

“Soap seems to be new to her.”

Says Roxanne after Miria leaves for the kitchen.
Don’t be so intimidating.

Miria comes back after a while.
Naked.
Wait, naked?

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She thinks bath will be fun.”

Did she take her clothes off after she was done with dishwashing?
So, is it okay to take bath together?

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“She says that she’s good at playing in the water.”

So there can be that kind of problem too?

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“If there’s a fish in the water, she says that she can catch it.”

I see. There will be no fish in the bath however.
I hope that she has no misunderstanding in regard to bath.

Miria looks at me with clear eyes.
Cent per cent pure eyes.

Ah!
It pains my heart.

Although I’m not being accused, I’m feeling guilty.
I’m feeling guilty for my nefarious thoughts.
I’m feeling guilty for my devious motives.
I’m feeling guilty for my lustful eyes.

Miria exposes her slender body without any reservation.
Like I thought, there's not plenty on her chest.
No! Don't look at her with lecherous eyes!
At least, Sherry shouldn't be envious of Miria's chest.

Her body is drawn with beautiful curves.
From above her lovely ass, a cute tail is extending out.
Because she's a beastkin like Roxanne, is that why she has tail?

"Ah, tail."
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Unlike us, wolfkin, they can move their tail on their own."

Unlike Roxanne's brush-like fluffy tail, Miria's tail has same thickness all the way to the tip.
Apparently, she can move it.

"Tail."
"Tail."
"Move."
"Move."

Miria shakes her tail.
While wagging her tail, she shakes her ass right in front of my eyes.
T-This…

Because it was right in front my eyes, I grab her tail.
The tail is sticking firmly to the core.
Can I shake it?
Like you shake hands at Korakuen Garden.

"Sorry, I kept you waiting."
"Let's take bath then?"

Roxanne seems to be done with maintenance of equipment.
We move to second floor.
Roxanne and Sherry start to take their clothes off upon reaching second floor.
It looks like a strip show.

I take my clothes off as well.
On my side, Roxanne has taken off her clothes.
Her melons spring forth the moment she removes her clothes.

Like water gushing out.
As you would expect from Roxanne.
Miria is undoubtedly beautiful but she falls short of Roxanne's appeal.
Roxanne is by far the best.
There's no need to compare however.

Four of us enter the bathroom.
One man and three beautiful women.
Sherry checks the water temperature before entering the bath.
I add a little more water and stir it.

In the meantime, I wash Roxanne's body.
I recall the moment from earlier when her melons spilt out.
No, i-it's not like that.
Order comes first.

"Wash."
"Wash."

While washing, I teach Miria one more Brahim word.
She repeats after me.
Body wash and dish wash are two different words in Brahim?
Is that why it didn't go through earlier?

"Wash firmly."
"Wash firmly."
"Wash thoroughly."
"Wash thoroughly."

I keep washing Roxanne while teaching Miria more Brahim words.
It's soft and supple, so I wash it firmly and thoroughly.
I wash Sherry next.
I wash her gently and softly.

"Alright, next is Miria."

When I say that, Miria comes in front of me.
Finally, at long last.
There's no hint of reluctance on her face.
So it's fine.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"She says that she's ready."
"Is she?"
"P-Please take care of me."

Miria lowers her head and says in Brahim.
Did she learn it beforehand in preparation for this moment?
I'm going to take full care of you, of course.

Chapter 85 - Field trip

I awoke hugging Roxanne, like usual.
Sherry is behind me, and Miria is the other side of Roxanne.
Sherry is against my back, and Miria is close enough to reach as well.

I can touch three people when I move.
The population density in the bed went up because there are more people.
It's a nice fit.

Roxanne kisses me.
How does she know I woke up? It's a mystery.

Quietly, without any sound.
I stuck to her, twining with her smooth tongue, wet with saliva.
Roxanne's tongue wriggles with passion.
After thoroughly twirling our tongues with each other, I released her mouth.

Next is Sherry.
Or so I thought, but she seems reluctant.
Things have changed, so she's thinking about something.

"Are you sure?"
"…"
"The order doesn't change?"

Sherry whispered as I held her, and drew her close.
I see.
Does the order change?
It's clear that Roxanne's position is solid.

Now that Miria is here, there is a chance to change order.
That Miria might get a more favored position.
Are you afraid of it?

"It's fine, there won't be any changes soon."

I answered quietly, and searched for Sherry's lips.
I won't deny that things will never change, because things might get too relaxed.

The kiss order last night was Miria, then Sherry, then Roxanne.
This morning we will maintain it with Roxanne, then Sherry, then Miria.
I didn't use Sex Maniac last night.
I shouldn't go all out on the first day.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Good morning-desu, Master."

When I release Sherry's mouth, something is said by Roxanne and Miria greets me.
Did you teach her to finish things like that, Roxanne?
There's no helping it.

Finally, I exchange a kiss with Miria.
Just lightly.
There will be plentiful use of the tongue in the future.
After poking her lips with my tongue, she pulled back a bit with anxiety, so I separated from her lips.

"Good morning Miria. Everyone get changed and we'll go to the labyrinth."
"Certainly."
"Yes."
"Yes-desu."

I get up and change my clothes.

"We only fought once yesterday. We will try the 12th floor. Miria, be on your guard."
"xxxxxxxxx"
"Yes-desu."

Miria answered when Roxanne translated.
Were the desu's taught by Roxanne?

Entering the pitch black wall of [Warp] takes us to Haruba's 12th floor.

“Good. Miria come as well.”

She was told it was safe even though it’s unknown, so there’s no problem?

“Yes-desu.”
“The labyrinth is dangerous. Every second counts. You don’t have to speak in a polite way in the labyrinth.”
“xxxxxxxxx”
“Yes.”

Roxanne guides our search through the Labyrinth.
Grass Bee, and Mino were defeated easily with four wind spells.

“I’ll use the sword in the next fight. If a Grass Bee appears, since it has a ranged attack we will charge it without waiting. Roxanne take us to the next one.”
“Yes.”

I pull Durandal out, and continue with Roxanne’s guidance.
Grass Bee has a ranged attack, so it would be a disadvantage to wait for it before fighting.

There isn’t a problem using magic.
However, magic takes time to cast enough spells to defeat the enemy.
There will be chances for enemies to attack if they rush in quick.

When I use Durandal, the strategy reverses.
I need to approach a demon to use my sword.
While I am approaching, I am completely exposed to the enemies ranged attacks.
Don’t wait. You need to run at the enemy as quickly as possible.

We encountered demons.
It’s a group of three Grass Bee’s.
Roxanne begins to run.

“Me, then Miria, then Sherry. Sherry you’re the rear guard.”

I followed Roxanne without waiting for an answer from Sherry.

“It’s coming.”

Roxanne stops along the way.
It’s the ranged attack from the Grass Bee.
I hear a small sound, and Roxanne begins running again.

I was worried about if it was avoided, but it seems to have been blocked with the shield.
It’s reassuring.
I am safe if I am behind Roxanne.
I’m running in the safety zone.

After making it to the Grass Bee, I circle sideways and use [Rush].
I attack again straight away.
The bee attacks my head as it hovers.
I barely avoided it.

I make a severe attack on the Grass Bee’s body.
The bee falls.

Three [Rush]’s?
It’s the same as Tare’s 13th floor.
I could probably defeat it with two [Rush]’s and a normal swing.

The second one was defeated with 2 [Rush]’s, a regular attack, and a pierce from Sherry’s spear.
It’s just like I thought.
Miria looked to be observing carefully.

The third one had Roxanne as it’s opponent.
I knocked it down with five swings from the side.
All the bees disappeared and left behind beeswax.

“Roxanne blocked the ranged attack, and was a great help.”

I thanked Roxanne as I received the beeswax.
Miria had been picking them up.

“Because we had Miria today.”

There was also Sherry and I.
Roxanne, I'd like you to understand that not everyone can dodge like you do.

"I'd appreciate you to keep blocking them in the future."
"I understand, though it takes more time than dodging them."
"I don't mind."

I gave Roxanne an order.

"Ok."
"Next, can you find some Mino or NT Ants."

I check the toughness of a Mino Lv12.
One [Rush] and a regular swing.
Grass Bee on the 12th floor is twice as strong.
I understand that we can fight on Haruba's 12th floor without problem.

The next challenge is how to get Miria accustomed to it.
Should I let her keep watching until divers level increases?
The ranged attack from the Grass Bee could be a problem.
There is always the chance of receiving an attack.

Should we start fighting on a lower floor in Vale or Quratar's labyrinth?
How is Quratar's 12th floor?
I don't plan to make it a regular hunting ground for now, but we should pass Quratar's 11th floor and go to the 12th.
There isn't any downside to it.

"I want to go to Quratar's 12th floor, do you think it will be safe for Miria?"
"I think it will be safe."
"The cane has been strengthened, so there shouldn't be a problem."

Roxanne and Sherry give their agreement.
Roxanne's opinion might be an overestimation, but if Sherry says it's safe is it safe?

"The map is in the house, so we'll get it, and make it to Quratar's 12th floor, then leave it til tomorrow morning. For today, how about we go to Vale's 8th floor?"

When Sherry was a master smith Lv1, we fought on the 8th floor.
The demon of Vale's 8th floor is the Collagen Coral.
Fighting it should be good.

I don't know if the Collagen Coral demon is considered aquatic.
It feels like it might be aquatic.
Coral is.

"xxxxxxxxx"
"xxxxxxxxx"

"Um. Miria would like to be taken along instead of being left in the house."

Roxanne reports after speaking with Miria.
I see.
Will Miria be alright even if it's unfamiliar?

"Shall we go?"
"Yes."

I [Warp] to the storeroom in the house where the map is kept.
It's before sunrise, and the room is pitch-black.

"There is a booklet on the shelf. We need the 11th sheet of papyrus. There is a spear leaning against the shelf, take it."
"They have been taken."
"That's fast."

Miria has grabbed the map straight away.
I can't even see Miria.
The ability to see in the dark seems to be extremely good.
I call out, and we go to Quratar's 11th floor with [Warp].

"Is here alright?"

Roxanne receives the map from Miria and checks it.

"It's the room near the entrance."
"I understand. This way."

“Miria, use the spear. Attack if you get a chance. Think about safety first, and don’t step out front.”

Miria starts to pass the spear, but I leave her with it.
It’s the copper spear Sherry used previously.
Since it has an empty skill slot, I didn’t sell it.

It’s possible to attack demons with the spear, while keeping some distance.
It’s a good weapon for Miria to use at the moment.
I receive the wooden shield from her.
She wears the dagger like a sword.

We move along the path indicated by the map, while beating several demons.
If the Green Caterpillar is defeated with 4 spells, then it isn’t much of a threat.
Miria succeeded attacking several times without taking a hit before we arrived at the boss room.

The boss on the 11th floor is the White Caterpillar. Roxanne makes all it’s attacks useless at the front, while I cancel all it’s skills.

Miria also pierced it with the spear from the side.
It is such a majestic battle.
It would probably calm me down if this was my first time in the labyrinth.
Do you feel that you’re fitting in as a party member?

“The demon on the 12th floor is the Sarracenia. It has a special attack that shoots digestive fluids. You might get poisoned if you are hit with it. It doesn’t have a tolerance to any kind of magic, and fire is it’s weakness.” TN: It’s a real plant if you want to google it.

We entered the 12th floor, and Sherry gave a briefing.
It shoots digestive fluids. It seems to be a scary demon.

“We’ll fight once.”

It’s the demon on the 12th floor, and I just have to use fire magic.
If I use fire magic on it, since that’s it’s weakness I’ll just have to use four.
It’s not a major threat if it’s just four.

“The 12th and 13th floors will bee good money for our party. It would be good for hunting, unless you want to go to the labyrinths in the Harz territory.”
“Why is that?”
“The Sarracenia drops aconite root, which is a raw material for the nourishment pill to be made.”

Sherry explained it, since I was puzzled.
I can make nourishment pill?
I should be able to make it from the herbalists skill [Herbal medicine generation].

Selling antidotes made from leaves makes more profit than just selling leaves.
So it’s the same for aconite root, it makes a higher profit as nourishment pills?

It’s natural.
If the aconite root was more valuable, people making nourishment pills would disappear.
The payment a herbalist gets from making nourishment pills must be high.

“I see. Roxanne, can you guide us to a Sarracenia?”

Roxanne leads us forward.
A demon with a grassy appearance appears.
It has two green leaves, and a green head.
The leaves stick out to the right and left. They appear to be it’s arms.

It’s almost the same height as Sherry.
You could say that it’s big, but it’s not especially big if you think of Japanese pampas grass, and goldenrods.
A brown root wriggles eerily towards us.

I used a [Fire ball].
The flames lick it’s grassy surface for an instant.
I use a second shot.
An orange magic formation appears at the base of the Sarracenia.

“It’s coming.”

Since I went to the side, even if Roxanne hadn't mentioned it I had already seen it.
I hid behind Roxanne immediately.
I am pathetic.

The Sarracenia lowered it's head.
I say head, but it's more like a tulip's flower.
The inside is hollow.
The Sarracenia's head is like a bag.

It has a feeling like a pitcher plant.
An insectivorous plant.
Is that why it shoots digestive juices?

The digestive juice is launched from the head of the Sarracenia.
I give it a [Fire ball] in return.
Roxanne blocks the demons attack with the Iron Shield.

Sherry & Miria pierce it with their spears.
The Sarracenia swings a leaf.
Roxanne avoids it.

I use a fourth [Fire ball].
The Sarracenia is covered in fire, and it collapses.

"Is the digestive juices alright?"
"Yes. It should dry soon."
"Oh?"

I check with Roxanne, but there doesn't seem to be a problem of it melting the shield.
Saracenia Lv12 is defeated with four fire spells, which is it's weakness.
It's the same as Grass Bee Lv12.

"The attacks are usually more dangerous than the digestive juices. It has a wide swing range which is hard to discern, and difficult to block with a sword or shield."

Finally, an enemy has appeared that annoys Roxanne?
The swing is hard to see because it's a leaf.
It's possible that it bends as it moves.

Sherry brings the dropped aconite root.
I remove monk, and add herbalist.
I put the aconite root in my palm, and use [Herbal medicine generation].
Three pills are made from the aconite root.

Nourishment pills.
Unlike antidote pills, there seem to be three.
This is how nourishment pills are made?

"Okay, I can make the nourishment pills."
"xxxxxxxxx"

Miria is saying something to Roxanne. She has an amazed expression.
Getting her used to things seems to be progressing well.

Chapter 86 - Mayonnaise

We kept hunting Sarracenias on 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth until one slot of my Item Box was completely filled up with nourishment pills.
I pass ten pills to Sherry for contingencies.

Miria has acquired Herbalist Lv1.
Because she picked up dried aconite roots, most likely.
Dried aconite root is considered a medicinal herb like leaf, it seems.

Surprisingly, fighting against Sarracenia wasn't that difficult.
Because it's plant, its offensive ability is not that great.
Even when I engaged it in close quarters with Durandal, it was an easy victory.

"Uh-oh"

When I was lost in thought, I get attacked with digestive fluid.
While I was focused on my sides, it drops on me from above.
I tried to jump out of the way but couldn't dodge it in time.

"So it has such an attack pattern."

Roxanne says casually. I was about to die here!
I swing Durandal and manage to take it out.

"Sherry, do you think Collagen Coral is an aquatic monster?"
"I think it is."

Because Sarracenia seems dangerous, we move to 8th floor of Vale's labyrinth.
Sherry agrees with my notion of Collagen Coral being an aquatic monster.

"Have you heard about a skill called Anti-Aquatic Enhancement?"
"I'm afraid I haven't."
"Miria doesn't know about it either?"

Because it's a passive skill?

“Miria, which is the highest floor you have visited?”
“Only first floor, she says.”
“Well, 8th floor may be difficult for you but the monsters there are aquatic, so you shouldn’t face any trouble due to your Diver job.”

We start hunting on 8th floor.
It took three spells to take out a Collagen Coral Lv8.
I adjust bonus points and increase Intelligence so much so that I can almost take monsters out in two spells.

I leave a Collagen Coral, that had already received two of my spells, for Miria.
Steel spear, scimitar or bare hands?
Miria neither has Swordsman job nor Monk.

Miria attacks using spear and easily takes the monster out.
When she attacks it with sword, however, it counterattacks.

As expected, her movement is not on Roxanne’s level.
That’s a relief.
I would cry if it were standard for beastkin.
When Miria tries to attack it with bare hands, she receives an attack.

“Are you alright?”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Yes.”

I apply Plating and cast two Treats.
Miria receives one more attack before taking out the Collagen Coral.
When I open Party Job Settings interface, Miria had Monk Lv1 and Swordsman Lv1 jobs.

“How were the attacks of the monsters?”
“She says that it was alright.”
“Can you fight against monsters other than aquatic?”
“Yes.”

Miria replies energetically.
She seems sufficiently motivated.
I’m glad.

We move to 8th floor of Quratar's labyrinth and fight against a Needle Wood Lv8.
I ask her to use sword again. While attacking, she receives an attack again.
I apply Plating again and cast Treat.

"How was it?"
"Although it's more difficult than Collagen Coral, she says that she can fight."
"Okay. So, do we advance through 9th, 10th and 11th floors? The number of attacks required to take monsters out increases by one with every floor. Or do we jump to 12th floor and have Miria stay in the rear?"

I was not sure myself, so I ask the three for their opinion.

It will be safer if monsters can be taken out in one hit.
Receiving attacks from monsters is desired the least.
I don't want Miria to suffer pain.
However, even if we enter lower floors, it won't be 100% safe.
It won't be funny if she receives attacks during this experiment of mine and dies.

I take the gamble and move to 12th floor.
Even if you're in the rear, it's not entirely safe for you are in labyrinth.
There's a possibility of stray magic coming your way.
On the contrary, if I have her observe 12th floor, she may grow more quickly.

"In my opinion, we should have advanced through the floors in order. Receiving attacks is not a big deal. In labyrinth, there's always risk of receiving attacks."

Roxanne opines.
To someone like Roxanne, it may really not be a big deal.

"Advancing through the floors in order is indeed better from safety viewpoint. It's not like we are going to receive attacks intentionally."

Sherry is rational as ever.
It will be nice if Miria is rational too.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Miria says that she agrees with what sister said.”

Are you sure Roxanne didn’t force you to say that?
Oh well, if she says that she’s fine with it, so be it.
Due to popular opinion, we decide to advance through the floors in order.

We move to 9th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth and then proceed to 10th.
I take out all monsters but one and leave that one for Miria to take out.
Whenever Miria receives an attack, I finish it off myself.
Because she has already acquired Swordsman and Monk jobs, there’s no need to overdo it.

“Are you okay?”
“Okay.”

She answers when I ask her while casting Treat.
She seems to have learned the word ‘okay.’
Miria has been able to endure attacks of monsters up to Green Caterpillar Lv11.

“12th floor will be difficult. Should we proceed?”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Okay.”

When Roxanne translates, Miria replies determinedly.
Miria seems to be brave by nature.
It’s a necessary trait to be able to fight in labyrinth.

I wonder if it’s natural for people to be so in a world filled with labyrinths such as this.
No, it’s people such as these who choose to fight in labyrinth.
Had I chosen a beautiful woman instead, I don’t think it would have been the same.
There’s a possibility that Miria is saying so superficially because she’s our party member.

“Well then, we’ll now move on to 12th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth. You will not actively take part in fighting. For now, just try to get a hang of it. Poke

your spear from the distance if you find an opportunity. You will be in the rear while Sherry will take your place in the front for the time being."

Having advanced through prior floors, she has now leveled up to Diver Lv3.
12th floor won't be a problem as long as she doesn't get killed in one hit.

We move to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
We start hunting in usual manner.
Miria is observing from the rear.
Like I thought, there's no problem in having her observe from the back.

Because I can take monsters out in four wind type spells, battles don't take long to end.
Ranged attacks appear sporadically but Roxanne takes care of those.

Over the course of morning, Miria's Diver job has leveled up to Lv5.
Because she's low level, the pace of her leveling up is quick.
If this keeps up, she'll soon be able to hold her own.

We finish hunting and head to Quratar's adventurers guild.
To buy ingredients for breakfast.

I was afraid as to what would happen at the fishmonger but Miria passes it by normally.
She's no longer insisting on eating fish.

Because she said earlier that she wants fish every ten days, is that why?

"The fish doesn't seem to be fresh."

While I was pondering over it, Roxanne whispers in my ear.
I see.
It's probably leftover stock.
Did they really put unsold fish from yesterday on stall?
That's bad for business.

"Does Miria want to make something?"
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Roasted meat. I'll help her out, so it'll be alright."

There really won't be any fish today.
If Roxanne will be cooking with her, it'll be fine.

"Then I'll make soup."
"Would you like to add egg to the soup?"
"Egg? Okay."

It seems to be Sherry's turn to make soup today.
After buying egg, bread and other food ingredients, we return home.
I'll make something else then.

I first take egg yolk and add some vinegar into it.
I bend a wire to blend it.
After that, I add some olive oil to the mixture.
Because I don't know the exact quantity of the oil to be added, I add it little by little.

I keep whipping it until it thickens.
I whip it.
And whip it.
Until it's ready. Mayonnaise, that is.

"Here."

I pass egg white to Sherry.

"I understand that this is egg white but what is that thing?"
"It's seasoning. We will make fish for Miria in the evening after tomorrow. It makes fish delicious."
"Ooooh"

Miria looks at me with shocked eyes.
She seems to have understood that we are talking about fish even without Roxanne translating it.

"You seem to be doing well in labyrinth, so this is your reward."
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Tasty, desu."

She hasn't eaten it yet but she's still calling it 'tasty.'

“It’s reward. Reward.”
“Reward, desu.”

Miria repeats it after me.
As for the meaning of the word ‘reward,’ I’ll teach that to her later tonight.
I’ll teach her the essence of the word.
I put the lid on mayonnaise.

“Don’t eat it just yet or it’ll upset your stomach. Also, don’t take it out with bare hands.”

I leave with that note.
There’s a chance for raw egg to contain salmonella.
It is, therefore, suggested not to eat raw eggs.
Because there’s vinegar and olive oil in mayonnaise, however, it’ll die out in about a day.

Apparently, Miria can make dishes other than fish.
It’s delicious.

I continue hunting after breakfast and then head to the Imperial capital in the evening.
To buy negligee for Miria.
Negligee here is made of thin, translucent fabric.
I wasn’t able to buy one yesterday.

We have already spent a night together, so she won’t be shy about it.
Miria is choosing her negligee with Roxanne and Sherry.
The three of them are making too much noise.

It will obviously take time.
I have made a mistake.
I should have done it before buying fish.
She would have immediately finished shopping had that been the case.

“Do you sell palace maid outfits?”

Because there was no end to waiting in sight, I start conversation with an attendant.

It's better to ask that from a male than a female.
Miria doesn't have any maid outfit.

"You can have it tailored. You just have to choose fabric and we will get it ready in ten days."
"Really?"

That's great.
It seems to be in demand.

"Ordinary fabric will cost you 3,000 Nar. Silk-blend fabric will cost you 6,000 Nar. If you opt for pure-silk fabric, it'll cost you 10,000 Nar. It's incredibly soft and has the best texture."

He leads me to the fabric section.
I touch the pure-silk fabric which he shows to me.
So smooth. So soft.
I imagine embracing Roxanne, Sherry and Miria wrapped in this fabric.

Damn!
This man knows exactly why I want maid outfit.
It was a mistake to have asked this from a male.

"This time, I intend to have only one outfit tailored, so I would like to go with ordinary fabric."

I can't have only Miria wearing outfit made of pure silk.
I ask him for ordinary fabric which costs 3,000 Nar.
The maid outfit which I bought from the slave merchant costed me 4,000 Nar.
If I eliminate his profit margin, it'll be same as this ordinary one.

In other words, he charged a profit of 1,000 Nar!
That's too much!
But it's too late now.

Miria finishes choosing her negligee.
It's blue. Same color as her hair.

“Well, I’ll take measurements then.”
“It’s for her.”
“Very well.”

I send Miria to a female attendant.

“You both received your outfits from the slave merchant in Vale but there’s no outfit for Miria, so I’m having one tailored for her.”

I explain to Roxanne while enjoying the spectacle of Miria giving her measurements.
They may think that Miria is receiving special treatment, so I explain it to them.

“Indeed. Miria is the only one who doesn’t have any.”

Replies Roxanne.
Are you okay with it?
I let out a sigh of relief.
If you have a harem, you need to take care of everyone.

“Thank you very much.”

Miria comes back after giving her measurements and expresses her gratitude after hearing from Roxanne as to what was it about.
She’s not as happy about clothes as she tends to be about fish.
Or perhaps she’s not happy about maid outfit?

“How would you like to pay? You can make advance payment either in full or half.”
“I’ll pay in full together with this.”

So there’s an option to pay latter half when the outfit is ready?
If I pay later, I’m not sure if 30% discount will work at that time.
At this time, however, 30% discount is effective for I have bought a negligee as well.
I pay for the maid outfit fully in advance.

“I heard from grandfather that you can pay in advance if you are going to have your clothes tailored.”

Sherry remarks at dinner.

“You heard from your grandfather?”
“To pay fully in advance is a token of trust.”
“Ah, I see.”

There’s a risk of merchant running away with your money if you pay in advance.
But there’s no such risk here for the store is in prime location of the Imperial capital.
On the contrary, it is I who may die in labyrinth.
So my paying fully in advance can be taken as an expression of trust.

“As expected of master. xxxxxxxxxx”
“M-Miria, do you like any dish other than fish?”

When Roxanne translates it, Miria’s expression turns respectful, so I try to change the topic.
What did she translate it to?
For some reason, I feel it’s not right to leave the matter of her education to Roxanne.
By the way, Miria properly made stir-fried food for dinner.

“She seems to like only fish.”
“I guess.”
“She also ate crabs and shrimps when she used to fish.”

There are crabs and shrimps in this world?
I have yet to see one.
They’re probably sold in areas near the sea.

“What about shellfish?”
“I don’t think there exists a person who doesn’t like shellfish.”
“Really?”

While Roxanne was translating it, I ask Sherry.

“Umm… normal shellfish can’t be eaten. Only shellfish that are dropped by monsters can be eaten.”
“I-I see.”

Really?
It's my first time hearing this.
I haven't seen shellfish anywhere.

"Shellfish is truly delicious. However, it's in short supply, so it's quite expensive. For this reason, common people eat it only on holidays or special occasions."

In this world, holiday is the first day of a 90-days-long season.
So they eat special food on special days?

"Miria has yet to eat one. I ate clam once. It was delicious."

What Roxanne ate was clam.
I wonder if it really is delicious.

"Clam huh? Is it sold at the fishmonger?"
"Umm… sorry. It wasn't my intention when I said that."
"Yes, I know."
"Also, Miria says that she has eaten enough fish for now."

Miria might have said that.
But I'm sure that it didn't come from her heart.

Chapter 87 - Clam Chowder

When I wake up in the morning, Miria greets me.
I somehow feel unusually refreshed upon waking up.
It's best to go to sleep after getting pleasurably tired.
Once you've got a good night's sleep, you would feel pleasantly refreshed.

I never felt tired with Roxanne and Sherry.
Now that they have increased to three, with the addition of Miria, I feel slightly fatigued.
However, this doesn't mean in any way that I have expended my all.
If push comes to shove, I have Sex Maniac.
I'm quite surprised at my own vigor, actually.

After kissing Miria in the last, I get up from bed.
She's still clumsy at kissing but it feels good in its own way.
The way Roxanne aggressively squirms her tongue in my mouth feels better, so does the way Sherry gently entwines her tongue with mine.
I'm lucky to be able to enjoy three varieties.

After changing into our equipment, we move to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

"Because we have already advanced through the floors in order, Miria should be familiar now. Try to fight on the frontline. Don't overdo it however."

I pull a copper spear out and hand it to Miria.
She's Diver Lv10 now.
Because her level has hit two digits, I can afford to have her up front.

Three of them line up in the front.
Roxanne positions herself in the centre with Sherry and Miria on her left and right respectively.
With this formation, we start hunting.

I can take monsters out on 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth in four spells.
Battles on this floor are not lengthy.
I can take the monster out before it's able to attack Miria successively.

I continue to hunt and observe her state.
She seems to be doing fine.
Miria has yet to receive an attack.

Ironically, It was I who receives first attack of the day.
When I swing Durandal, I receive body slam from a Grass Bee.
When I use Durandal, it becomes dogfight. Consequently, the battle lengthens, so I can't help but receive attacks.
This is the excuse I have come up with.

Plating is indispensable for Miria.
Therefore, I can't remove Alchemist.
Because I have other skills at my disposal, I decide to remove Warrior.
Without Rush, it takes four normal strikes which requires time.

Before long, it becomes easy to take a Grass Bee out in four strikes of Durandal.
Miria leveling up being the reason.

In the beginning, it used to take about five strikes due to missed hits.
However, I can consistently take them out in four strikes now.
I can't become strong overnight.
It takes time. One step at a time.
Coincidentally, the more Miria is leveling up, the more I'm becoming strong.

Miria's Diver job has an effect 'Small Increase in Strength.'
Job effects seem to be shared by all party members after all.
'Small Increase in Strength' effect of Diver job is definitely being shared by the party. The extent of increase depends on Miria's level.
Apparently, if all party members are high level and one low level member joins the party, they can fight without any trouble.

First experiment is over. Time for second.
Although I'm a little apprehensive, I change Miria's job to Villager Lv5.
I send Miria to the rear. It now takes five strikes of Durandal to take a Grass Bee out.
So it was thanks to Miria's Diver job that I was able to take monsters out in four strikes.

By the way, when I fight using Durandal, I join Roxanne in the front.
Miria connects with her spear from the back.

Depending on the number of monsters, Sherry switches between the frontline and the backline.

When I'm in the front, fights take longer to end compared to when Miria is in the front.
It can't be helped, however, for I receive attacks from monsters.
Never before had I thought as to why people in the front take longer.

Today, Roxanne receives an attack as well.
When you're in the centre of the frontline, you're exposed to most of the attacks.
In other words, I shouldn't even think about taking central position in the front.

There's no other option.
Nothing can be done about it.
She has to bear with the attacks.

I receive another attack. This time, from an NT Ant.
I return the favor with Durandal and take it out.
When Grass Bee, Mino and NT Ant appear together, we take out the NT Ant first.
Reason being, it can use poison attacks. Also, I can take it out in two strikes.

NT Ants appear together with other monsters.
So I can't help but receive attacks.
I don't receive attacks, however, when I fight one-on-one.
I believe so, at least.

After taking out NT Ant, I rush toward Grass Bee.
The ant turns into smoke and dissipates.

Oh
What remained in its place was not poison sting but a white card.
A monster card.

Monster Card | Ant

Ant Monster Card?
While glancing at it, I take two Grass Bees out.

I didn't receive any attack from the Grass Bees.
I could afford to take my eyes off them because Roxanne was there to hold them off.

I receive the monster card from Sherry.

"What skill does Ant Monster Card give?"
"If fused with an armor, it gives Poison Resistance skill. If fused with a weapon, it gives Poison Fang skill."
"Poison skills huh? Well, I intend to use Kobold Monster Card with Rabbit Monster Card. Should I use Ant Monster Card as is?"
"You can have it fused with your armor. It'll give you protection against poison attacks. When you upgrade your armor, you can just resell it for good price."

Should I attach the skill to my armor then?
It's understandable because I'm the one who receives attacks from monsters the most.
Thus far, I'm the only one who has been inflicted with poison.

"Should I fuse it with my leather cap? Or should I buy new hard leather gloves?"
"The better the equipment, the higher the profit margin upon reselling it."

I see.
You should have told me so before attaching Water Resistance skill to leather mittens.
I would have bought better equipment at that time.

Perhaps Sherry was not confident that she would be successful?
If you use expensive equipment, you have to succeed.
If you don't think you can succeed, you should better use either that equipment which you can remake or cheap equipment.

Because she is confident now, is that why she's recommending me to fuse it with better equipment?
It's natural to be confident if you succeed consecutively without failing even once.
I must do my part, so that she doesn't lose this confidence of hers.

We finish hunting and move to Quratar's adventurers guild.
It's still too early for the armor shop to open.
I head to the fishmonger.
Miria comes right by my side.

There was a fish which she was staring at intently.
I wonder if it's a quality fish.
She doesn't say anything however.

I have already announced that there will be fish for tomorrow's dinner.
So it's probably enough for her.
It's serving as her restraint.

"Do you sell clams?"
"Of course."
"I would like to buy two."

I speak with the old man explorer and receive two clams.
It doesn't have shell.
It looks like a shellfish without shell.
When I use Appraisal, it says clam.

I try to put it in my Item Box.
As expected, it's a dropped item.
It goes into the Item Box without any problem.

It's small however.
It really is 'small,' not 'not big.'

"Thank you very much."
"Can I have two more?"
"Certainly."

Freshwater clams are not this small.
It might be oriental clam.
Whatever, it's clam nonetheless.
If larger ones are not available, I'll just get more.

"Thank you very much. Four clams will be 896 Nar."

I pay the amount to the merchant.
It's pretty expensive.
If you compare it with the prices of eggs and vegetables, it's quite high.

Because it's a dropped item, most likely.
If it were cheap as kobold salt, no one would bother selling it.

In respect of serving per person, prices of meat and fish are about same.
Clam, however, seems expensive.
No wonder it's eaten only on special occasions.

"Are you sure about this?"

When we leave the fishmonger, Roxanne asks.

"I'll make soup this morning, so I bought extra."
"Okay, I understand."

When Roxanne translates it to Miria, she looks at me wide-eyed.
I'm still not sure if Roxanne translates my words accurately.
After buying bread and vegetables, we return home.

First, I add a little wine to water and simmer the clams.
In case of shellfish, you keep the pot open. Because it's clams, however, I don't know the time it'll take to boil.
If I leave it for long, it may get overcooked.

After that, I dice vegetables and ham, and stir-fry it. Next, I make white roux.
I take the clams out from the pot and add it, along with stir-fried vegetables and ham, to white roux.
I then heat it up to slightly below the boiling point. It's ready. Clam chowder, that is.
I take the pot off fire and put it on dining table.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Miria says that it's her first time eating clams."

Oh, so she was watching me when I was cooking?
The surprise has been spoiled.

“Although there are clams, it’s basically soup.”

One clam with some soup for each of us.
I wonder if the soup is failure.
It can’t be. No ingredient is missing if I remember correctly.
Smell wafting from the soup is great, at least.

I taste it to confirm.
Oh
Delicious!
It’s a success.

I pick the dark clam up from the thick soup.
The clam is chewy and rich in flavor.

So delicious!
It was worth every Nar.
How can it be so delicious?

And whats with this amazing smell?
I know it’s awkward saying that about something I made myself.

“Master, it’s really delicious.”
“It’s by far the best clam I have eaten.”
“Tasty, desu.”

I receive positive feedback from the three.
I wonder if I’m master or mistress.

I should make it again sometime but not so often or they’ll get used to this luxury.
It’ll be troublesome.

After breakfast, I visit the armor shop by myself.
I buy a hard leather cap and hard leather gloves.
There’s hard leather headband too but it seems to be an accessory for females.
Because Roxanne isn’t here, I get done with it in no time.

After returning home, I pass hard leather cap and Ant Monster Card to Sherry.
Sherry takes a deep breath and fuses the monster card successfully.

Poison Resistant Hard Leather Cap | Head Equipment
Skills: Poison Resistance | Empty

“Oh, I did it.”
“Well done, Sherry.”
“Amazing, desu.”

Miria leans forward.
Now that I think about it, Miria must have seen Sherry doing this for the first time.

“As expected of Sherry.”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Miria says that everyone in this party is so amazing.”

She looks at Sherry with eyes full of respect.
If you work hard, you deserve appreciation.
Roxanne isn’t the only amazing one in this party.

Kaga Michio | Male | 17 years old
Explorer Lv37 | Hero Lv34 | Wizard Lv36 | Alchemist Lv31 | Monk Lv35
Equipment: Rod of Offerings | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Cap | Leather Armor | Hard Leather Gloves | Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | Female | 16 years old
Beast Warrior Lv26
Equipment: Scimitar | Iron Shield | Leather Cap | Hard Leather Jacket | Leather Gloves | Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | Female | 16 years old
Master Smith Lv24
Equipment: Steel Spear | Leather Cap | Chainmail | Waterproof Leather Mittens | Leather Shoes

Miria | Female | 15 years old
Diver Lv12

Equipment: Copper Spear | Leather Cap | Chainmail | Leather Gloves | Leather Shoes

We put our equipment on and move to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
Because I can't afford to test Poison Resistance skill, I fight in usual manner.
Should I try to deliberately receive a poison attack?
Nope.

I don't mind receiving antidote mouth-to-mouth from a party member however.
Okay, I'm ready.
When I want to receive attack, no one is attacking me.

This time, it's Miria who receives the attack.
It's a group a four Grass Bees.
I take all four of them out in four Breeze Storms.
I apply plating and cast four Heals.

"Are you okay?"
"Yes."

It looked like there was quite an impact but her face doesn't suggest so.
So, is she really okay?
Her Diver job has leveled up to Lv15.

"I'll give her wooden shield now. She'll be on the frontline with you, Roxanne. Tell her not to overexert herself however."
"Understood."

Roxanne translates it.
I take copper spear back and pass wooden shield to her.
Miria pulls out the dagger on her waist.

Under Roxanne's guidance, we encounter a group of three Grass Bees and a Mino.

"Miria, stay back until the monster approaches."

When I shot first Breeze Storm, Miria lost her footing.

“Here it comes.”

Right after Roxanne says this, one of the Grass Bees shoots a needle.
It’s better to have Roxanne take on this ranged attack.
After Roxanne deflects the needle with her shield, I launch second wind spell.
After I shoot third Breeze Storm, Sherry and Miria step forward.

One of the Grass Bees tries to shoot another ranged attack but it was too late.
Sherry and Roxanne take on a Grass Bee each. Miria takes on the Mino.
It’s one-on-one now.
Sherry thrusts her spear into the Grass Bee.
Roxanne slashes with her scimitar while Miria waves her dagger.
Miria parries the Mino’s ram with her wooden shield.
I launch fourth Breeze Storm.
Bees collapse one after the other.

Miria seems to be able to fight in the front just fine.
Once she gets accustomed to this role, it’ll be great.

Chapter 88 - Fish Fry

“Do you need olive oil?”

Asks Roxanne.
Before we were done with hunting for the day, we move to 6th floor of Vale’s labyrinth. Reason being, there are Naive Olives on this floor.

“Just a little.”

We hunt Naive Olives until one slot of my Item Box was completely filled with olive oil.
We finish hunting and move to Quratar’s adventurers guild.
Miria is excited and walks ahead of us.
Today is the day for the promised fish.

“Fish~ fish~ fish~ desu.”

It’s obvious that she hasn’t forgotten.
We make a beeline for the fishmonger.
There are other things I want to buy but it’s not possible to buy anything before buying fish.

“Is there any good fish?”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Rock sole, she says.”

The moment Roxanne translates my question, Miria immediately points her finger at one.

“You have a keen eye for fish. This pseudo-trout was caught just now. It’s fresh and its meat is excellent. It tastes best when roasted or stewed.”

Rock sole is called pseudo-trout?
Well, it does resemble trout.
Its size is about 20 centimeters.
Just the right size.

“Four pseudo-trouts then.”
“Thank you for your patronage.”
“Here are four pseudo-trouts for a special price of 28 Nar.”

So one fish is priced at 10 Nar?
It’s not that expensive.
Compared to clams, especially.

I pay the amount to the merchant while Miria receives the fish.
The old man explorer wraps the fish in papyrus and hands it to Miria.
Carrying four fish is supposed to be difficult, it seems.
Well, if he wants to do it, there’s no reason to refuse.

“I’ll be making fish for Miria. Is there something you want to make, Roxanne, Sherry?”
“Very well. Sherry, would you like to make soup?”
“Alright, I’ll make soup then.”

I buy other ingredients like bread, eggs and vegetables.
We visit the smith, who had been looking after our house before we rented it, and buy a pot.

“Miria, is there any utensil that you want for cooking?”
“This pan is good.”

Roxanne translates.
Miria points to a pan with shallow base. It looks just like paella pan.
Handles are attached to both sides.
We indeed don’t have such a pan in our house.

“This?”
“With this pan, she says that she can make delicious fish cuisine.”

Fish again huh?
I had to go for 30% discount anyway.
This pan would do the job.
After buying the pot with lid, which I chose, and the pan with shallow base, which Miria chose, we return home.

“Miria, can you fillet the fish?”

I ask her in the kitchen.
Miria gets down to it without needing Roxanne to translate what I said.
I knew it. She understands all those Brahim words which have even slightest relation with fish.

I leave an egg to boil.
Fish has been filleted already.
Miria brings filleted fish on chopping board.

“Yes, desu.”
“It’s done already?”
“Done, desu.”

I receive fillets from Miria.
There are eight slices.
They have been carefully skinned.
It looks tasty already.

“Can you please squeeze these lemons?”
“Yes, desu.”

Once again, she gets down to it without needing Roxanne to translate.
I add chopped vegetables, mayonnaise and lemon juice to the pot, and crush the boiled egg.
It’s ready. Tartar sauce, that is.

“Now finely crush this bread. Like this.”

I pick the bread up in front of Miria and Roxanne who’s translating.

“It’s called bread crumbs.”
“Bread crumbs?”
“Because I don’t have cheese, I’ll use this as substitute.”
“I-I’ll translate it to Miria.”

Why is she making such a sad face?
She translates it to Miria and runs away.

I add some olive oil to the new pan and heat it.
I dredge the slices – which I had already seasoned with salt and pepper – in

flour, beaten eggs and bread crumbs, and fry it in the pan.
After pouring some tartar sauce over it, fish fry is ready to be served.
Now that it's ready, I'll have the girls know that it wasn't a substitute for cheese.

This recipe involves very few steps, so the chance of failure is low.
Judging from the look, however, there doesn't seem to be any problem.
Miria is staring at it with watered mouth.
I hope it's a success.

The moment the dinner starts, Miria digs into the fish fry.
When she stuffs her mouth with the fish, her eyes open wide.

"T-T-T-Tasty, desu!"

She seems to like it.
I try to eat mine.
It's indeed delicious.
The sour taste of tartar sauce is mingling quite well with the taste of the fish.

"It's delicious. I have never eaten such a dish."
"Neither have I."
"It's one of the fish recipes I know."
"As expected of Master."

Roxanne and Sherry seem to like it just as well.
Miria looks depressed after having downed two slices.
Each slice was enough in its own right.

"Here, have mine."
"Thank you very much, desu."

The moment I divide my slice, Miria snatches it.
Miria snatches half of Sherry's and Roxanne's as well.
Sharing food helps in developing better relationship.

Fish fry doesn't seem to exist in this world. I can make it however.
Caught up in the moment, I make tonkatsu next morning.

Although eating meat for breakfast is not a good habit, I get to eat only two meals a day in this world, so it's not an issue.

It has been quite long since I last ate tonkatsu. (TN: Tonkatsuhttps://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonkatsu)
Although pork meat can easily be acquired on 13th floor of Tare's labyrinth, it's delicious.
Although there's no sauce here, it's delicious.
It kind of reminds me of Japan.
"Isn't it strange?"

Roxanne says when we resume our morning hunt.

"What is?"
"There's a person ahead. At such a time as this no less. This person was there yesterday at the same location and the day before yesterday as well."

It's indeed strange for someone to be at the same location in the labyrinth everyday.
Well, I too hunt at the same location for quite an extended period of time.

"Is it perhaps a monster that smells like human?"
"I haven't heard of such a monster. So far, I have been avoiding that location because I was supposed to stay clear of places with people."

Because I use magic spells, I instruct Roxanne to avoid crowded places.
When there are people waiting next to boss rooms, we avoid boss battles as well.
Because it's a bad idea.

Few days have passed since we advanced to 12th floor.
Since I can take out the monsters here in four spells, hunting has been smooth thus far.
Because we can't see anyone around, that person must be on the far end.

"Now that I think about it, I have heard such a thing."
"Do you know something, Sherry?"
"Thieves set up ambush in those labyrinths where not many people are found, like this one. I'm sorry that I forgot about it because I heard it way back when I was a kid."

Thieves?
Is that really so?

“Not many people?”
“Many people enter Quratar’s labyrinth, so it’s not best to set up ambush there. An ambush will be effective in labyrinths, such as this one, where not many people are found.”

There are three labyrinths in the Harz duchy.
I was asked of by the Duke because they were short of capable people.
Knights and explorers in the territory must have been divided in three groups.
So the people per labyrinth are naturally less.

“But why here, on 12th floor?”
“Monsters on 12th floor are a lot stronger than monsters on first eleven floors, so people upgrade their equipment.”
“To rob equipment?”
“Indeed. Those who advance to 12th floor, albeit barely, can be classified as intermediate. Thieves can overpower them with enough numbers. Even if they possess better equipment themselves, intermediate equipment can be sold for good sum.”

So, is this why they set up ambush on 12th floor?
Sherry’s explanation sounds rational.
So there’s a possibility of getting ambushed by thieves on 12th floor?

“Should we wait until he’s gone?”
“If he’s here at this time, you can safely assume that he’ll be here all day. And there are less people at this time because it’s quite early in the morning. It’s a good opportunity to break through.”

Roxanne is brave as ever.
Haruba’s labyrinth is in the north of Quratar’s labyrinth.
It must already be day here but I opt to remain silent
Because if I say that, I’ll have to explain that the world is spherical.

“We should ask the order of knights for help.”

We have another option. Reporting it to Gozer, that is.
But we don’t have any evidence. I can’t say that there is someone who

seems to be thief.
That thief must have entered through the entrance but he was not caught there.
Even if I use Appraisal, I can't present that fact as evidence.

If I kill this thief and collect the bounty, his companions might come looking for me.
That'll be bad.
Killing him is no good.

Also, if I try to claim bounty, I'll need to have my Intelligence Card verified.
Gozer and the order of knights believe that I'm an adventurer.
I can't have them see my Intelligence Card because I'm an explorer.
So approaching Gozer is no good either?

"I don't think the order of knights will help anyone other than the Duke and his family."

Sherry advises against asking the order of knights for help.

"They won't?"
"Protecting us is not their duty."
"Because Master is a free person."

Roxanne supports Sherry.

"I see."
"It does seem difficult."
"Free people are supposed to protect themselves. That way, they can preserve their privileges as a free person. If a free person requests protection, they lose their rights as a free person. Asking for protection is not the best idea."

Sherry explains further.
I don't quite understand this but it seems to be a bad idea.
What I do understand is, there's no such thing as police in this world.

Protect myself?
I have to protect myself?
Isn't that my right? Isn't that their duty?

It's not like I can't ask for protection.
However, it's not free.
I'll have to pay the price.
Instead of asking for protection, can't I just have them listen to me?

Because I'm a free person, I'm supposed to protect myself.
Therefore, even if I say something in this regard, will they listen to me?
After all, I'm supposed to protect myself.

"Is that so?"
"Therefore, we should break through on our own."

So Sherry is brave as well?
Is this attitude rational in this world?

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Okay."

When Roxanne translates our discussion to Miria, she nods as well.
I'm not sure anymore what's right and what's not.

"It'll be alright. There's only one thief. And we are not that weak either."
"I think so too. Thieves set up ambush with the strength of normal parties in mind. On 12th floor, parties normally take considerable time to take even one monster out. We, on the other hand, take monsters out a lot quicker. Miria and I may be weak links of the party but against a thief, we'll do just fine."

When Sherry says the same thing as Roxanne, it begins to sound rational.
Should we break through on our own then?
It seems normal course of action in this world, at least.

I killed thieves in the very first village I appeared in. I also killed thieves to fund Roxanne's purchase.
But this doesn't mean that I want to make it my profession.
Besides, I don't want to put Roxanne, Sherry and Miria in danger.

If it's one-on-one, however, I can't imagine Roxanne finding herself in trouble.
Sherry has leveled up quite a bit, so she can hold her own against low level

thieves.
My concern is Miria who has only recently joined our party.

Well, we don't even know yet if he's actually a thief.
He may be someone who happened to be at the same location for three days straight.
We have to confirm first.

I can use Appraisal.
I can identify immediately if he's thief or not.
With Roxanne's nose, Miria's eyes and my Appraisal, we don't have to be worried about surprise element.
If his level is too high for us, we'll just run away.

"Miria, are you fine with it?"
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"Yes."

When Roxanne translates, Miria nods.
Is it really alright to confront this thief?
These three seem to be brave enough to do it, at least.

"Okay then, I'll go ahead. If I raise my right hand with sword, it's the signal to attack. If I raise my left hand, it's the signal to retreat."

I decide on the signal to retreat if something goes wrong.
I pull Durandal out and head to the location.
It would have been easy if I could use Meteor Crash.
For better or worse, however, area of effect attacks seem to inflict damage only upon monsters.

I prowl through the cave cautiously.
So as not to alert him.

"I'm sorry. There seems to be a hidden room. Earlier, I thought that there was just one. However, if the smell is from the other side of the door, there may be more than one."

Roxanne apologizes.
There's no one visible to the end of the cave.

The thief seems to be on the other side. Furthermore, not just one.
I can't use Appraisal from here.

I can't even go to Gozer like this.
I must confirm that they're thieves.
It'll be better if they're some distance away from the door.

"Everyone, behind me. Roxanne, you take the rearmost position."

With Durandal in my hands, I lead from the front.
In labyrinth, it's not unusual to hold weapon.

I walk to the end of the cave.
The door slides with rumbling sound.
The door sets down, making way to a small room.
There were six thieves inside.

Chapter 89 - Subjugation

In the small room in the labyrinth, there are six thieves.
Their levels aren't too high.
Four of them in their 10's, and two in their 20's.

Can a party like this make it to the 12th floor without being attacked?
I don't think so at all.
The maximum party size is six, so it would be six vs six it there were six opponents.
It would work out to one vs one fights.

Even if they catch me by surprise, I should be able to slaughter them all.
If I counter-attacked desperately, the difference of two people shouldn't be bad.
Then I can take my time looting.

If I'm cornered, I could probably get out of it with reckless violence.
The thieves are a cool headed bunch, that lay in weight to attack someone in the labyrinth.
I don't think these six could rob people on their own.

Is their attack power divided? Do they have more members somewhere else?
They probably aren't ready since it's early morning.
They've already lost the chance to make a surprise attack.

"xxxxxxxxx"
"?"

A thief says something, but I don't understand since it isn't in the brahim language.
When I look confused, a Lv28 thief approaches me.

"Good morning. The boss room is through there. We are going in after we take a little rest."

He gestures for us to pass on his left.
He is the one with the highest level among the six thieves.
He seems to be able to speak Brahim.

I watch, and enter the room.
The thieves split up.

Oh crap.
It looks like a move they've trained at beforehand.
The thieves move quickly, and spread through the room.

We weren't really surrounded.
It was more of a cautious distant circle.
They can't tell me not to be cautious, because they are doing the same.

It's difficult to quickly kill the thieves.
It would be a fight with unnatural movements.

What will happen if a fight starts?
Their level is low, and I can probably kill two of them straight away.
I'm not sure about a third person.
By the fourth person, it would be impossible to catch them off guard.

If I fight in this room, Sherry and Miria might also be drawn into a one vs one, as well as Roxanne.
I don't think that I'll lose, but I can't say for certain that I'll win without losses.
I should avoid danger as much as possible.
Can you hear what the thieves are saying quietly.

"Thank you."

We moved left where the thief gestured.
Thieves were standing in positions to block the other passageways.
They don't show an appearance like they are about to attack.

I see.

I understand the thieves strategy.
Of the three directions, aside from the way we entered, one must lead to the boss room like the thief said.
Otherwise there would be no point in putting a trap here.
There are probably more thieves waiting in one of the directions.

It's a good strategy.
Even if there are six thieves waiting in this room, without [Analyze] you would just think it was a regular party taking a rest.
If strong people come, and they don't think they can win, they just have to let them past to the boss room.
If someone who seems weak comes, they guide them into the trap.

Did they decide that I was strong? Or easy prey?
Should I have let Sherry & Miria wear misanga's in a flashy way?

When I pass by the thieves at a distance, they look behind me.
They are smiling in a vulgar way.
Are they aiming for the women?

I want to punish them, but I shouldn't make my move here.
Maybe I don't seem like an easy mark.

The door opened, and we went into the cave to the left.
There's nobody.
The cave just continues forwards.

"…they should die."

Were the thieves only looking at Roxanne and Miria's chests?
I agree with Sherry.

"There are three or four people around the bend."

Roxanne at the back, catches up to me with quick steps and reports in a whisper.
Sherry, be pleased.
I will destroy them.

Is it a pincer attack from the back and the front?
It's a good strategy for a thief.

They seem to have decided that we are an easy mark.
Maybe they were just blinded with greed looking at Roxanne's chest.
It's like scattering bait.

“They are thieves. Fighting them is inevitable. Roxanne, the front. Sherry, the back. Cover Miria, keep her behind Roxanne. I will fight the thieves, you give priority to defense. I’ll move around freely, don’t try and keep up with me.”

I take the copper spear from the item box, and exchange it with Miria’s wooden shield.
The spear should be good against thieves.
I’m glad I kept it in case it was useful.

We moved on to the bend.
Roxanne shakes her head a little.
The thieves seem to be a little further on.

I went around the bend.
There are four people at the edge of the cave.
Bandit Lv24| Pirate Lv67| Thief Lv48| Explorer Lv42

All of them are very high level.
Especially the pirate, he’s amazing.
Bandit, it’s the first time I’ve seen one.
Is he their main fighting force?

It would be annoying if we are caught up to from behind, so we advance at a jog.
Four people spread to block the cave.
Three in the front, and the bandit Lv24 behind them.
Is the bandit their leader?

“Did you think there was a boss?”
“Sorry, but it’s us thieves.”
“xxxxxxxxx”

The men ahead make jokes.
One person doesn’t speak brahim, so I’m not sure what he said.
Because Roxanne doesn’t react, it probably doesn’t matter anyway.

As for the explorer, was he threatened or join them unwillingly?
He might just be corrupt as well.

Thieves behavior is pretty bad.
Even without [Analyze] you could probably tell they are thieves.
If I try and time a surprise attack, it would probably be advantageous.

From the back, the six people from just before have caught up.
The thieves surround our back and front with ten people.

“If you leave the women, we will spare your life.”

I see.
It’s not a surprise attack, so they think there is room for negotiation.
They’ll take less damage if they don’t have to fight.
If you are sandwiched from the back and front, some parties will give up.

But the possibility of thieves letting someone live, and leave, is zero.
I understand that.
It must have been difficult to find this place, and it would be impossible to use again if they let someone go.
But a decision like that is hard to make when you’re surrounded by thieves.

“All of you, drop your weapons.”
“…you can at least go with your life.”

There are ten enemies.
Four of them have a considerably high level.
One party might be an easy victory for them.
Normally.

“One brave man in the complicated puzzling labyrinth.”

I ignore the thieves, and utter an incantation.

“It’s impossible to escape, this cave is coated in cover cement.”

The explorer thinks I’m a fool.
Of course they’d think about that.
When they finally got someone in their pincer, if there was an explorer the party could just escape.

If they use cover cement, [Field walk] can't be used.
Cover cement must have the same effect against [Dungeon walk].
If so, it would be impossible for a party to escape.

"Dungeon walk."

I ignore their advice, and say the skill name.
I say [Dungeon walk], but use [Warp] in my head.
A black wall appears.

It is possible to use [Warp], even if there is cover cement.
I rushed into the wall.

"Shit, dungeon walk was supposed to be unusable."
"xxxxxxxxx"
"It's just one person that ran away, the women are still here, what a stupid bastard."
"Who's a stupid bastard?"

"While hearing Roxanne's voice, I thrust in with Durandal."
I was at the back, and stabbed into the bandit Lv24's neck.
I moved right behind him with [Warp].

From the place I appeared, I had a perfect shot.
Durandal struck right where I wanted it.
In a single blow, the bandit Lv24 falls.
Because of the falling sound, the other thieves notice the situation.

"Shit, what happened?"
"Kill them all!"

It will be hard to fight against everyone at once.
Between Sherry and the six thieves at the back, I made a [Fire wall].

"There's another one. A wizard is hiding himself somewhere."
"xxxxxxxxx"

The thieves panicked.
I can't block the whole cave with the fire wall, but it helps.
Sherry's spear is waiting to thrust into them.

The main force of three people with high levels head to me.
It's a good decision.
Because I moved, these three are in a position sandwiched between us now.
This brings the advantage to us.

It's also convenient.
If they come to me, Miria's danger decreases.
How should I defeat these three now?

Large scale attack magic isn't usable on people.
I can use single target magic on them.
I can't use other magic until the [Fire wall] burns out.
Still, it seems I can use bonus incantations.

The wizard job is out, but the bonus incantation is a different matter.
If I make some distance, I can use the bonus incantation.
If possible, I don't want to use it, but I don't have that luxury.

When the thieves approached, I use [MP full release] towards the man in the center.
The single purpose attack magic from the bonus incantations.

The pirate Lv67 explodes.
The man in the center of the three thieves blew up suddenly.
His equipment is left behind, but he literally exploded.

"Wha…?"

The movement of the men to either side stopped for a second.
The pirate next to them had exploded.
They can't help but stop.

I hold back the feelings that are welling up, and desperately continue.
I can't miss this chance.
I don't want to do anything, my mind is a mess, but I still wield Durandal.
The neck of the thief Lv48 who had stopped for a moment was cut without difficulty.

I can feel my MP getting recovered.
It seems I can absorb MP from people.
I hold back the feelings of wanting to run away, and continue on.

The explorer who was next to the pirate had also stopped moving.
There's spray from the pirates body sticking to the explorer.
He needs a little time to recover his thoughts.

The recovered MP is suppressing the hopeless emotions, and I continue moving my arm.
My sword flies towards the explorers neck.

More MP is recovered.
It's enough for another luxury.
I used [Warp] again.
I came out behind the six thieves.

"You can't escape."

I called out to the thieves from the back.
I open my item box, and take out a strength pill and a restore pill.
I tossed them into my mouth as I took off.
You can't go through a long war without recovery.

"xxxxxxxxx"
"xxxxxxxxx"

The six people try to argue, and charge towards me at once.
Though the [Fire wall] just disappeared, there are three people over there including Roxanne.
Over here there is just one.
Naturally they will try for the exit on this side.

But, it's not a good idea.
They probably haven't thought of it.
There was a [Fire wall] between the six thieves and Sherry until just now.
I use the [Fire wall] again without incantation as the six people come.

The first thief took some awesome damage, and was beheaded by me as he was startled by the fire that appeared behind him.

The second and third thieves ran directly into the [Fire wall].
I've recovered some again, but the MP used might have nearly instantly killed me.
The fourth thief half enters the fire, and then jumps sideways panicking, and is cut down by me.

The fifth thief only touches it a little, and then jumps backwards.
He falls on his backside.
Is there only one person that got off safely?

"I'll take you down a bit."

Roxanne and the others are there.
The safe person turns, and tries to make distance.
I advance forward.
Towards the thief who fell on his backside..

I'm nearly in range, I take a great step forward and aim for the neck of the thief who fell on his backside.
The standing thief stabs at me.

It's a good idea for the thief.
If my sword wasn't Durandal.
A normal sword can't cut off someones head so easily.
When I try to cut the head off, I might get stabbed to death.

But, the sword I am using is Durandal.
I easily cut off the head of the man who fell on his backside, and continue the swing into the side of the man coming to attack me.
He loses his momentum, and I avoid the attack.

I draw the sword back, and then push it into his stomach at full force.
Then I slowly pull it out.
The thief collapses.

"Master!"

Roxanne rushes up.

“Is everyone alright?”
“Yes.”
“Roxanne and Miria, please confirm that there are no thieves who ran away. Sherry, please help collect the intelligence cards, I’ll need something to wrap the hands up so you can cut some clothes off the thieves..”

It might not be over yet.
I gave instructions to the three people immediately.
All the thieves we were able to confirm should have already been defeated.

In addition I used magic with no incantation, I also use [Warp] and [MP full release].
If someone saw it, I would have to dispose of them.
Roxanne and Miria head towards the small room that had the six thieves.

“It was a wonderful fight.”
“Thank you.”
“You should collect the hands quickly.”

Sherry started working with indifference.
I cut off the thieves hands.
I piled them up on the clothes Sherry had cut off.

It seems I did it just in time.
When I cut off the hand of the bandit, he disappeared as he was absorbed.
The equipment is left, and the body is absorbed by the labyrinth.
The body of the bandit sank into the floor in an instant.

The other thieves bodies disappear as well, one after the other.
This is how the labyrinth digests a person?

“I don’t think there is anyone who escaped.”

Roxanne and Miria came back.

“I see.”
“It was an amazing fight. As expected of Master.”
“Thank you. I’m glad that Roxanne and the others are safe an uninjured.”
“Yes.”

None of the three seem to have been injured.
I was most worried about them being hurt.
This is the best result.

“The thieves weren’t able to do much because of the [Fire wall] you made. Thank you.”
“xxxxxxxxx”
“Miria also says that it was amazing.”

Even though I’ve just hacked up the thieves, these three don’t seem to be avoiding me.
Originally, these three were the ones who instigated this.

When I count the hands, there are eight.
The explorers hand will not have a reward, so I do not take it.
The hand of the pirate who exploded because of [MP full release] was not able to be collected.
It seems to have dispersed with no remaining pieces of the hand.

Chapter 90 - Collection

I breath a sigh of relief, and collect the treasures the thieves left.
All the items are taken.
I'm reasonably sure I don't need to strip search them.

"I've let you experience something serious."
"Not really, Master defeated everyone."

While picking up the equipment, I looked at Roxanne's expression.
Is it alright that I killed thieves?

"This can happen at any time, and we survived."

Sherry has something reasonable to say.
These three have grown up in this world where thieves attack people.
Killing a thief is something they expect.

"xxxxxxxxx"
"xxxxxxxxx"
"xxxxxxxxx"
"It seems that Miria was quite surprised, and thinks it seemed easy for Master despite it being a place like this, and she will keep it a secret."

There seems to be a person with different assumptions.
Something bad happened, but intervening was difficult.
The wrong person is in charge of education.
I don't comment, and devote myself to collecting equipment.

The thieves leather equipment has hard leather equipment mixed in.
A hard leather hat, hard leather gloves, and hard leather shoes.
It would be an upgrade for everyone.
There is only one item with an empty skill slot.

After I've checked them, I put them in the item box.
Hard leather armor… Ah, am I the only one who can use it?
Sherry glares at me as I look around.
Women have a certain chest shape, so none wear this.

There isn't enough room in my item box, so I give it to Sherry.
Should I remove alchemist, and use cook?
Miria has leveled up a bit, and should be fine without [Plating].

"There is a Ring of Determination."

There was a Ring of Determination in the thieves equipment.

Accessory: Ring of Determination: [Attack power increase], [Personal strengthening].

The accessory has skills.
One of the bandits had it equipped.

"I think it's a high grade item."

Sherry informs me.
A high grade item?
It's definitely a good accessory.

As for weapons, there are two steel swords, and an iron sword.
There isn't any skill slots in any, so nothing awesome.
I might keep one steel sword for now.

Next is one rapier, and one steel shield.
The pirate had the one handed sword.

"A rapier?"
"Yes, it's a thrusting sword. It's a higher level sword for stabbing instead of slashing. It uses a different combat style too."
"Is it good for Roxanne?"
"It's good. The rapier also has a blade, so it can be used for slashing as well."

Is the attack style for a rapier like fencing?
It should be alright to use.

"Then, the rapier goes to Roxanne, and the scimitar with iron shield go to Miria."

I pass the steel shield and rapier to Roxanne.
Roxanne tells Miria something, and passes her the iron shield and scimitar.
Sherry receives the dagger and wooden shield from Miria, and puts it in her item box.

There were ten magic crystals.
The thieves seem to have had one each.
When you sell magic crystals in the guild, they don't check your intelligence card.
The thieves must know that.

There was one yellow magic crystal.
A yellow magic crystal is quite precious.
More than 100,000 demons have been defeated.
It might be more valuable than the reward money.

"Umm. Even though it's still early we should return to the house. You should wipe your body, and your clothes should be washed. The equipment needs to be given maintenance as well."

After we've picked up everything, Roxanne makes a suggestion.
There is blood on my clothes.
There might also be blood on my face.

Should I return straight away?
I can't fight with this bundle of hands.
I don't need to take a stamina pill since I absorbed MP from the thieves, so I have enough MP.

I returned to the house.
The eastern sky is getting brighter, the sun will rise soon.
I take my clothes off at once, and wipe my body in the bathroom
Roxanne washed my clothes for me.

"Roxanne, today was bad."

I was able to defeat them, but it was careless to have fought with them.
It was planned well, I was invited into a trap set by the thieves.
I don't know how things would have gone if there was a strong thief as an opponent.

I'll have to be more careful.
It would have been traumatic if I had just come to this world.
I would have withdrawn from everything, and spent all my time in the labyrinth.

Why aren't I doing that now?
It's because of my experiences.
I have been used to fighting for a while now.
I'm willing to fight, and can handle that much.

I was able to win, so I'm not wrong.
I live in this world now, and it's not bad to be accustomed to combat.
But, it's still a frightening experience.

About fighting, everyone has a different potential, and you have to judge it carefully.
If you don't, at some stage you'll be caught off guard.
I win, and I tighten the cord on my helmet.
Today might be a good lesson.

"What do you mean? It was a splendid fight. It's natural to defeat a thief."

Even fighting is common sense in this world.

I leave the bathroom, and change my clothes.
I reorganise my item box.
Three people are bringing their equipment together and performing maintenance on it, and I'm freeing up space in my item box.
I can go for a bit longer without needing to use cook.

I will merge the magic crystals the thieves had into one.
A white magic crystal has the magic power of 1 million demons, and is apparently the highest.
I already have a green crystal that has the magic power of 10,000 or more demons.
If the thieves yellow crystal has 900,000 or more magic power, and my green crystal has nearly 100,000 magic power, then there would be some waste if I merged them.

I keep my green magic crystal, and only merge the thieves crystals together.
The yellow crystal did not become white.

I'll keep the green magic crystal, but I'll fight with the yellow one from now on.

I keep the one I'm using in my item box, and any ready to sell are kept in Sherry's item box. Now the spare one will be kept in the store room.
The copper spear is put against the wall in the storeroom.

I used [Character reset] while alone in the store room.
I added points to [Bonus equipment], and [Second accessory].
It's the first accessory I saw when I came to this world.
When I ended the [Character reset], a ring appeared on the forefinger of my left hand.

Accessory: Ring of Determination: [Attack power increase], [Personal strengthening].

There it is.
The Ring of Determination.

I had been curious since I used [Analyze] on the accessory from the bandit.
Apparently the accessory from my [Bonus equipment] skill, and the accessory from the bandit are the same thing.
The same name, the same ring, and the same two skills.
Are there people other than me that can use [Character reset]?

The Ring of Determination I made is brand new.
The other ring is dull and has scratches.
I can tell they are different from a glance.

I used [Character reset] again, and cancelled the Ring of Determination.
Then I put on the ring from the bandit.
Sadly, the skill for [2nd accessory] didn't light up.
If it had, I could have gotten 3 bonus points.
Naturally, it's impossible.

Now for a different experiment.
I used [Character reset] to activate [Second accessory] and then swap the ring with the ring left behind by the bandit.

It seems I can disable it.

I boldly do it.
The Ring of Determination disappears.
There's no abnormality showing in my bonus points.
When I activate [Second accessory] again, the ring re-appears.

But, it's a new item.
The ring doesn't have the worn look and fine scratches on it.
The item seems to be a new item when created with [Character reset].
The Ring of Determination with the worn look and fine scratches is gone.

I cancel [Second accessory] and return to the main room with the new ring.

"Do you know what kind of person can make something like this?"

I asked Sherry.

"It's the Ring of Determination from earlier?"
"Yes."
"A Fixation."
"A Fixation?"

There seems to be something.

"That's right, you aren't part of a guild."
"Oh?"
"The blessing of fixation can be received at the guild temple. If you receive the blessing you can't change your job anymore. It is believed that you become stronger and it's a blessing from the guardian deity of that guild."

So that's fixation.
There are guardian deities, and shrines in guilds?

"Are the guardian deities in the guilds?"
"Nobody has actually met one, so I don't know if they are real or not…"

Sherry is always rational.

"So, fixation is locking in a job?"
"Yes. When fixing, an accessory might appear on the person, and it's assumed to be a gift from the guilds guardian deity."

“Like this ring?”
“I’m not certain, but I assume that ring came from a fixation.”

I don’t know what Sherry thinks when I take out Durandal.
Maybe she thinks that I put it away in my item box.
It’s not really different from using the item box, since I can use the item box without the incantation.

Is there someone that can take out the ring like I do?
Fixation might be related to [Character reset] and bonus points.

There is a connection.
When you take out an accessory.
It becomes impossible to change your job.
Since you get bonus points from each level up, it becomes impossible to switch to a lower level job while you’re using them.

There’s something else.
You become stronger with fixation.
Bonus points can also be added to your status.

“Do you know what kind of equipment appears?”
“It seems to vary according to the person. There are wizards who get swords, and fencers who get canes. Fixtures always create equipment with a skill, and very rarely something amazing appears.”

It’s a little different.
I only use my sword as a bonus weapon.
Does it vary from person to person?

“What kind of people get what kind equipment?”
“It’s quite easy to get the blessing if you’ve been doing the job for a number of years, and the increased strength and equipment is good. But since you can’t change your job after fixation it’s normally done by people who are thinking about retirement. If a good piece of equipment comes out it can be passed down to your descendants as a family heirloom.”

It’s not quite what I was asking, but it doesn’t matter.
Is it random? Is there a rule to it?
The armor that I get from bonus points is equipment for men.

If a woman gets bonus equipment, it would not be strange if something different appeared.

If the Ring of Determination came from fixation, you could think it relates to bonus equipment.
Since bonus points are based on level, if you raise your level more it might be more profitable.
A person who was active in their job for many years will get the blessing easily, that seems like evidence that fixation requires bonus points.
Are fixation and bonus points related?

After hearing the story from Sherry, I checked the intelligence cards.
There were eight of them.
I know what to do with the intelligence cards.

I can take them to the Order of Knights in Quratar, or I can take them to the Order of Knights in Vale.
I can get a reward straight away.

The less people that know I've defeated thieves is probably better, so should I take them to Vale's Knights?
Maybe it's dangerous there and people are watching for me to take them in?
Should I take them to Quratar's Knights?

The first option is to take them to the Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy.
If I pass them to Gozer, it shows I was in a labyrinth in their territory like I promised.
I'll be in their favor for exterminating thieves hanging out in a labyrinth in their territory.

Special connections I've gained in this world.
I need to value them.

It would be troublesome if I'm seen as being too useful.
There's always another side to things.
Is there a problem in how I found the thieves?

The problem is checking my intelligence card.
If they check my intelligence card to give me the reward, they'll know that I'm not an adventurer.
I shouldn't expect them to skip the check since they know me.

Should I bring the card to the Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy after I become an adventurer?
Then I can't get the reward until after I've become an adventurer.
Explorer Lv50 is the lowest condition, so it will still take some time.

"Sherry, can you tell when someone died from their intelligence card? Do you know?"
"I haven't heard anything like that. The age someone died can be checked though, so you can narrow it down to some degree."

You can guess by the age when they died?
Unfortunately, if the thieves birthday is tomorrow, you can understand they died by today.
Will they know when thieves birthday's are in this world?

"Do they know when thieves birthday's are?"
"Um, only by every season when the age on the intelligence card increases."

It's like that?
It's the first I've heard of it.
They base years on seasons?
It's fine if I start the count from each spring.

If it takes too much time to become an adventurer, I can just take it somewhere else.
For now, I'll keep the thieves intelligence cards for a while.

Chapter 91 - Replenishing Recovery Medicine

I put the matter of Intelligence Cards on hold for the time being and decide to dispose off equipment left by the thieves.
What do I do with their hands?

“How do I dispose off these hands?”
“Dump them in a labyrinth. They’ll be digested right away.”

Suggests Sherry.
Labyrinth huh?
Because labyrinth can digest dead bodies, it’s a perfect dumpster.

I wonder if it’s alright to feed it.
Actually, it’ll send monsters outside if it’s not fed.
If it’s fed in moderation, it’ll not turn ferocious.

“Okay then, let’s go and buy ingredients for breakfast after discarding these hands. Because strengthening pills have been used up, we need to stock up on those as well.”
“Raw material used in strengthening pill is dropped by Fly Trap, the monster native to 13th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth. I would rather recommend hunting in Quratar than buying it.”

Sherry informs me about the raw material used in strengthening pill.
Now I get why the prices strengthening pill and nourishment pill are identical. Nourishment pill’s raw material can be acquired from 12th floor while strengthening pill’s from 13th.

“And raw material used in strengthening medicine?”
“It’s dropped by Animal Trap, the boss of 13th floor.”

Oh, so it’s like that.
If I can get it myself, why should I buy it?

The small room, where we found the thieves, was next to the boss room.
That was the reason why they had set up ambush there.
We have almost cleared 12th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth.

Therefore, an excursion to 13th floor of Quratar's labyrinth shouldn't be a big deal.

We will have to fare without strengthening pills and strengthening medicine for the time being.
Recovery medicine is our only back up.
Because we have map of Quratar's labyrinth, we can clear the floor in no time.
If it's for a short while, we can take the risk of going on without MP recovery medicine.

MP recovery medicine is not required for boss battles.
Because I use Durandal against boss monsters.
Although we don't have strengthening pills, we won't face much trouble.
We can't obtain strengthening medicine until we defeat the boss of 13th floor. The quicker we clear rest of the floor, the quicker we can take the boss out.

After dumping the hands on 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, I buy the ingredients and then have breakfast.
Haruba's labyrinth was quiet. There were no more thieves in ambush.
If you look carefully, however, you can find a minute blood stain.
But it's dark here, so it won't be noticed.

After breakfast, I sell the equipment, pick up the map and enter 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

"Sherry, put this Ring of Determination on."
"Are you sure?"
"It would be a waste if I were to use it."

Sherry equips the Ring of Determination.
Roxanne and I have Sacrificial Misanga.

Sacrificial Misanga is really a useful equipment.
Even though I have received countless attacks from monsters, it has yet to activate.
The attacks I received didn't inflict critical damage, it seems.
On the contrary, if I receive critical damage and it fails to activate on the off chance, I don't even want to imagine the consequences.

“Thank you very much. I thought that it would be worn out but it’s almost new.”

…I will pretend that I didn’t hear it.

“Roxanne, what’s the situation?”
“As you would expect from 12th floor. Even though it’s broad day, there are very few people.”

It doesn’t seem to be crowded like first three floors.
The higher the floor, the less the people.
If it’s 12th floor, we can afford to hunt in Quratar’s labyrinth even in the day.

“Then I’ll have to trouble you.”

After having confirmed that there are not many people around, I ask of Roxanne to search for monsters.
Except for labyrinths in the Harz duchy, people take special notice of magic.
Therefore, I avoid people as much as possible.

“Ahead is the boss room. I’m not sure if there are people inside or not. I caught smell but it has vanished. They have probably moved on.”
“Thank you. As expected of Roxanne. We were able to reach the boss room without encountering anyone.”
“Not at all. I must be the one thanking you.”

So even Roxanne can’t tell if there are people inside the waiting room?
There is another door separating the boss room from the waiting room.
When the party inside the boss room is done, the party inside the waiting room proceeds to the boss room.
It is difficult to tell from outside whether the party is in the waiting room or the boss room.

There’s always some risk. You can’t completely avoid it.

I earnestly visit labyrinths of the Harz duchy.
Even if I didn’t, it’s not like the Duke and Gozer would blame me excessively.

Still, I can't tell them that I visited Quratar's labyrinth to collect raw materials. It's not a valid excuse.

"Miria, can you go and see if there are people inside? If there aren't, give us a signal. If there are, come back."

To mitigate the risk, I ask Miria to go.
Gozer has yet to meet Miria.

"Yes."

When Roxanne translates it, Miria nods quickly and proceeds.
The door to the waiting room slides open. Miria peeks inside.
Miria turns around and signals.
No one seems to be inside.

Three of us rush inside.
Miria sticks her chest out proudly as if she has accomplished a mission.

"Thank you. Well done, Miria."
"xxxxxxxxxx"
"As you would expect."

That said, I don't think it can really be considered a mission.

"Yes, desu."

Is Miria happy because she was of use?
We enter the room.
There was no one in the waiting room.

"Sarracenia boss is called Nepenthes. It's basically strengthened Sarracenia. There is a point to note however. On 12th floor, other monsters appear alongside the boss, so we have to be careful."

Sherry shares the information on the boss of 12th floor.
Thus far, our boss battle strategy has been to leave the frontline to Roxanne and attack from the back. However, we can't use that strategy this time around.
It is impossible for things to always remain the same.

When we enter the waiting room, the door to the boss room immediately slides open.
Four of us enter the room.
Smoke gathers. Monsters appear.
One Nepenthes and one Sarracenia.

“Roxanne, hold the Nepenthes from the front. Sherry, Miria, keep the boss occupied. I’ll wipe out the small fry first.”

I give instructions to the three and charge toward the Sarracenia.
I hit the Sarracenia with successive Rush attacks and silence it.

I join the boss battle immediately after.
Nepenthes is a pitcher plant but its pitcher is larger than Sarracenia.
Its overall size is bigger as well.

Unlike Sarracenia, the brown pitcher of Nepenthes looks creepy.
You can tell that it gets its food not from photosynthesis but from eating other creatures.
Actually, even Sarracenia doesn’t get its food from photosynthesis. Both are carnivorous plants and, on top of that, monsters in labyrinth.
(Insectivorous plants need nitrogenous compounds, which they obtain from insects, for amino acid. They produce starch normally through photosynthesis.)

We need to be attentive for it may swing its leaf and attack from behind us.
This is troublesome.
I should have asked Miria to use spear instead.
Her level is adequate now, so it would have been fine.

In the end, it turns out easy for we were four against lone Nepenthes.
We maintain our winning streak.
The Nepenthes collapses.
It turns into smoke and dissipates.

“xxxxxxxxxx”

Before I could see the item it dropped, Miria shouts excitedly.

“Fish savings, she says. There seems to be a magic crystal.”
“Magic crystal?”
“She says that there wasn’t any before the battle. It appeared just now.”

While Roxanne translates it, Miria picks the magic crystal up.
Great!
So she can identify it the moment it appears?

“As expected of Miria.”
“She says that It started glowing, so she immediately noticed it.”

Nope. Because it’s black, it doesn’t glow.

“It’s magic crystal. Repeat, magic crystal.”
“Magic crystal.”

I should have taught her the right word back then.
After teaching Miria one more Brahim word, I receive the magic crystal from her.
I receive the dropped item from Sherry.
It’s called summer solstice.

I remove Warrior and select Herbalist, and try to make medicine.
In my palms, summer solstice turns into three nourishment medicines.
Summer solstice is a medicinal herb after all.

“You really did it.”

Sherry is surprised for some reason.

“Isn’t that a given?”
“No. I have heard that summer solstice can’t be processed on the first attempt.”

Eh?
Wasn’t Sherry the one who told me that I can make strengthening medicine from the item dropped by the boss of 13th floor?
If strengthening medicine can be made from the item dropped by the boss of 13th floor, can’t nourishment medicine be made from the item dropped by the boss of 12th floor?

“C-Can’t be processed?”
“Yes, but I knew you could do it.”
“As expected of Master.”
“As expected, desu.”

I don’t feel like I did something worthy of praise.
My Herbalist job is Lv4 now.
It kept leveling up when I was making nourishment pills the other day.

A Herbalist Lv4 is not supposed to be able to defeat Nepenthes, it seems.
Even if a Herbalist Lv4 can make nourishment medicine, no herbalist was probably able to ascertain that.
There’s another possibility that it’s dependent on MP.
Because I have Wizard Lv37 supported by Hero and Monk, I have enough MP at my disposal.

“It’s no big deal.”

I stuff the nourishment medicines and the magic crystal in my Item Box and leave the boss room.

“The monster native to 13th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth is Fly Trap. It’s similar to Sarracenia. It uses water magic attacks. Its normal attack has chance to inflict poison. It’s resistant to water magic. Its weakness is fire magic.”

Sherry shares the information. We encounter a Fly Trap.
Like Sherry said, it looks like Sarracenia. Even its size and shape is same.

But there’s one difference.
Its head is not pitcher.
It’s sliced open into two in order to trap an object inside.
Is it carnivorous like Sarracenia?

I fight while keeping an eye on its head.
I take it out in five spells.

“It didn’t attack with its head.”
“But we shouldn’t be careless for carelessness is lethal.”
“Higher level ones may attack with their head.”

According to Sherry, high level Fly Traps may attack using their head.
Like Roxanne said, however, carelessness is taboo.
I have already received digestive fluid of Sarracenia on top of my head.

I receive polygala root from Miria.
Because Herbalist job was still active, I immediately try to make medicine.
Three strengthening pills.
Same as nourishment pills.

“Since I can fight against Fly Traps without much trouble, search for group of monsters.”

I ask of Roxanne to search for multiple monsters.
Sarracenia and Fly Trap both are weak against fire magic.
Five spells don’t pose much of a challenge.
It would have been difficult, however, had I not upgraded my cane.

“Here it comes.”

Amidst fighting, Roxanne warns.
It’s ranged attack of Fly Trap.
Roxanne takes it on.

It needs not be mentioned that she dodged it.
A bullet of water fades in from where Roxanne was supposed to be standing.

“Ah, that was close.”

I somehow manage to evade.
I knew it. I’m not safe behind Roxanne.

“I’m sorry. I should have deflected it off my shield.”
“Deflect?”
“Yes. You can deflect most of the force behind the attack but you receive some damage.”

You should have taught me how to do it.

I position myself slightly in diagonal with Roxanne.
Roxanne, who's in the center of the frontline, will receive most of the attacks.
Therefore, I should not stand in line with Roxanne and the monster.

Water magic is troublesome but we carry on hunting on 13th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.
It takes about five strikes of Durandal to take out a Fly Trap Lv13.
It was four on 12th floor.
Oh well, it can't be helped.

When I was fighting using Durandal, I borrowed the Ring of Determination from Sherry.
But there was no apparent effect.
"5x Increase in Attack Power" skill of Durandal doesn't seem to stack with "Increase in Attack Power" skill of Ring of Determination.

I make a bulk of strengthening pills.
I pass a dozen of pills to Sherry.

"We have already acquired strengthening pills, should we go for strengthening medicine or not?"
"We should, I think."
"It's rational to keep it in reserve for contingencies."

I obtain Roxanne's and Sherry's support to challenge the boss of 13th floor.
Because I have been exploring for quite some time, I have got a hang of it.

From 12th floor to 22nd, same monsters appear in every labyrinth, albeit in different order.
The monster that appears on 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth may appear on 22nd floor of some other labyrinth.
By the same token, the boss of 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth may be the boss of 22nd floor of that other labyrinth.
If I defeat the boss of 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth, I will have one less thing to worry about when I challenge the boss of 22nd floor of that other labyrinth.

I won't say that it'll be easy because strength increases with level.
Green Caterpillar Lv11, for instance.

That said, it's still the same monster.
It can't become unexpectedly strong.
You won't have to be worried about surprise element.
It's 23rd floor and onwards where difficulty level jumps up again.

As far as Quratar's labyrinth is concerned, we have its map, so exploration itself is quick and smooth.
Unlike Vale's and Haruba's labyrinths, where we have to explore each and every corner of the floors.
However, regardless of which labyrinth it is, advancing to next floor is not smooth.

"Okay then, would you please take us there?"
"Certainly."

Roxanne guides us to the boss room of 13th floor.
Miria takes a peek inside but finds no one, so we enter the room.
We take out both the boss of 13th floor, Animal Trap, and accompanying Sarracenia.

"Why was Sarracenia accompanying the boss?"
"Any monster that appears on a floor may appear with the boss of that floor."

As per Sherry, Animal Trap is Fly Trap boss.
Sarracenia is troublesome to deal with but I took it out swiftly.
Once the boss was surrounded, Durandal did the rest.

Sherry brings dried orange peel over to me.
Is this the item dropped by Animal Trap?
I use my Herbalist skill and make three strengthening medicines.

Chapter 92 - Emphasis on Experience

After making strengthening pills on 13th floor of Quratar's labyrinth, my Herbalist job has leveled up to Lv6.
I haven't removed the job just yet.
Miria's Diver job is now Lv20.

The speed of leveling up is quite fast.
It may be due to higher value of gained experience on higher floors.
Or perhaps the value of gained experience increased only after 12th floor?
Whichever the case is, we are gaining experience quickly.

I have to level my Explorer job up to Lv50 as soon as possible to acquire Adventurer job.
I can't move freely until then.

12th floor was the reason why those thieves had set up ambush there.
I, however, killed those thieves on that very 12th floor.
If I turn in their Intelligence Cards to the order of Harz duchy knights, I'll surely be asked as to how I was able to kill those thieves on 12th floor.

Rather than moving to Haruba's labyrinth, it's better to explore 13th and 14th floors here.
If someone finds me there, it may get complicated.
What was a person, who's exploring 14th floor, doing on 12th floor?
I'm being unnecessarily worried.

I should carry on hunting in Quratar's labyrinth.
However, Quratar is not completely safe either for there are a lot of people here.
I may encounter someone who's connected to the Duke of Harz.
But the chance is remote that I'll encounter such a person in Quratar's labyrinth.

I open Character Reset interface.
I set Required Experience to 1/20th and Gained Experience to 20x.
My emphasis is on experience now.

I have a total of 135 bonus points because my Explorer job is Lv37.
Required Experience 1/20th requires 63 points, so does Gained Experience

20x.
I can't deselect Character Reset option. After allocating 7 points toward fourth job, I'm left with 1 point.

Should I make do with three jobs?
Hero, Wizard and Explorer?
But Monk is needed for emergency situations.
In the end, I leave it at four jobs and allocate 1 point toward Short Incantation.

"Sherry, which monster appears on 14th floor?"
"The monster native to 14th floor of Quratar is Hat Bat. It's quite small in size, therefore, hitting it is not that easy. It can bypass the frontline, so those in the backline have to be cautious. It's generally weak against magic attacks, especially water, wind and earth magic."

It's troublesome for someone like me who stands in the back.
Under Roxanne's guidance, we come across a Hat Bat.

Hat Bat is a black bat.
It's difficult to see it clearly in the dark.
When it stops flapping its wings, it looks like a black bowler hat.

"Water Ball."

Ugh!
Although I had closed some distance before attacking, it still managed to dodge it.
The Hat Bat suddenly changes its altitude.

For second attack, I use wind spell but it dodges again.
Its movement is quick.
Third attack, Earth Ball, hits successfully.

Roxanne is standing in the front.
Sherry and Miria are surrounding the bat from the sides.
I position myself diagonal with Roxanne.
So that I can keep my allies out of the line of my magic attacks.

Fourth attack hits as well.
The Hat Bat cuts in and approaches quickly.
Roxanne parries it with her shield.
The moment the bat comes to a halt, I cast fifth spell.

The Hat Bat collapses.
Five spells huh?
Even Durandal might have taken five to six strikes.

“Umm… why did you call out the spell names?”

Why, you ask? Because I don’t have enough points to select Skip Incantation.
But I can’t say that to Roxanne, so I’ll have to come up with an acceptable excuse.
I can’t say that I have chuunibyou.

“Because it’s difficult to hit Hat Bat, I thought it’s a good opportunity for us to practice coordinated attacks.”
“Indeed. I understand.”
“Th-Then I’ll have to ask of you to search for groups.”

I’m not completely at ease but…
But against a group of monsters, I can use area of effect attacks.
I won’t have to worry about missed hits if I use area of effect attacks.

Three Hat Bats and a Fly Trap appear. I take out Hat Bats in five Breeze Storms.
After three more Fireballs, the Fly Trap drops down as well.
What annoys me is that Hat Bat is weak against magic of three attributes, yet fire isn’t one of those three.
Hat Bat is a nuisance.

“Try to look for groups of either carnivorous plants or bats.”
“It’ll be difficult but I’ll try.”
“If you’re unable to find such groups, find those wherein not more than one monster differs from the rest.”

If it’s just one monster that remains, it’ll be Roxanne to take it on from the front.
She’s reliable.

Under Roxanne's guidance, we carry on hunting.
As I asked of her, she finds groups of either four same monsters, or three-one and two-one composition.
Because Hat Bat is small in size, its movement is quick, and its attack is difficult to dodge.
Sherry and Miria are struggling.

Because I have used too much of my MP, I pull Durandal out.
I remove Gained Experience 20x and select 6th-tier weapon.
Because I still don't fully understand as to how decreasing Required Experience really works, I opt to keep it.

I decrease jobs to three and select Skip Incantation.
Whenever I use Durandal, I move to the frontline.
Because only Roxanne and I will be receiving attacks from monsters, Monk isn't required.
Even if I receive damage, I have HP Absorption Skill of Durandal.

Holding Durandal, I approach a Hat Bat.
I keep an eye on the bat's movement.
I can't possibly think of landing an attack just like that when even Sherry and Miria are having hard time.
While I was thinking so, the bat hurls itself on me.

I invoke Overwhelming.
I connect one strike straight away and slash once more after maneuvering my body.
That second strike was cool, wasn't it?
Under the effect of Overwhelming, I feel I can dodge just like Roxanne.
When the bat approaches me again, I invoke Overwhelming again.
I move Durandal only slightly and try to connect third strike after having hit twice.
That's great. I can land three consecutive strikes.

The Hat Bat collapses.
I charge toward next one.
With Overwhelming, Hat Bat looks just like a punching bag.
Since I'm recovering more MP than I'm expending, there's no problem in that regard as well.

"Wow, desu!"

Miria praises me.
Praise be upon Overwhelming.

I recover my MP through Durandal.
It's not efficient to use Overwhelming so sparingly but it can't be helped.
After recovering fully, I ask of Roxanne to search for groups of Hat Bats and carnivorous plants again.

I had 4 points to spend after decreasing jobs from four to three.
Of 4 points, I used 2 to upgrade Short Incantation to Skip Incantation, 1 to increase Gained Experience and 1 to select Meteor Crash.
I use Meteor Crash on a group of monsters.

Hat Bats are weak against earth magic while carnivorous plants are weak against fire magic.
I'll confirm then if Meteor Crash is a fire spell or not.
Both Fly traps and Hat Bats drop down in just one Meteor Crash.

Does it even have any attribute?
Because I have upgraded my cane to rod, that's probably why I was able to one-shot both Hat Bats and Fly Traps.
I can't go back and equip weaker weapon just to confirm this notion.

It's actually better if I can take monsters out like this.
It's not a problem in any way.
It was worth the effort because Miria is amazed after seeing this spell for the first time.

We carry on hunting.
We are doing just fine.
We can fight on 14th floor without much trouble.

"Sherry, do you know about the boss of Quratar's 14th floor."

When we take a break from the labyrinth in the afternoon, I ask Sherry.

"Hat Bat boss is called Pat Bat. Pat Bat is basically strengthened Hat Bat. It's not strong in offense. However, its attack inflicts paralysis. You can't heal yourself or take pills until it wears off. That's the only noteworthy feature of Pat Bat."

“I have anti-paralysis pills but only two.”
“Unlike poison, you do not lose HP over time, so there’s no risk of death. Also, it’s not impossible to break free of it.”

So it’ll be alright?
We have to advance to the next floor as quickly as possible in order to increase our leveling up speed.
Still, is it a good idea to clear 14th floor and move on to 15th so quickly?

“Should we proceed to 15th floor?”
“I don’t see any issue.”
“We will do fine, I think.”

Roxanne and Sherry accede.
But I have never seen them rejecting any of my proposal.
Roxanne, of course, won’t find it difficult. But what about Sherry? Will she be fine?
Was it rational of her to consent to it?

“Okay, desu.”

When Roxanne translates it to Miria, she nods as well.
Is it really gonna be alright?
This attitude seems to be natural for the people of this world. On the contrary, I may seem excessively cautious to them.

Still, I’m afraid of advancing to higher floors so quickly.
I’m afraid but I can’t help it.

In the afternoon, we enter Quratar’s labyrinth again and move to 14th floor.
I decide to keep one anti-paralysis pill and pass the second one to Sherry.
We proceed per map.
After having Miria confirm that there are no people inside, we enter the boss room.

“I’ll take the small fry out, you three engage the boss in the meantime.”

One Pat Bat and one Hat Bat appear.
Both are bats huh?
No Sarracenia or Fly Trap? Great!

I'm not saying that it's luxury.
Still, I couldn't help but think so when I saw them.
I invoke Overwhelming and take a hack at the Hat Bat.

"Here it comes."

Before I could finish the Hat Bat off, Roxanne's voice reaches my ears.
It's activating skill.
I must not let it activate the skill.

I invoke Overwhelming again and slash at the boss.
I made it somehow.
I was able to connect Durandal with the boss before it could finish incantation.

I'm back against the Hat Bat.
I invoke Overwhelming again and take it out.
I close in on the boss.

I can see our winning streak extending.
It's difficult to connect strikes because it's flying up high but I use Overwhelming whenever it approaches me to attack and shave its HP.
I use Overwhelming again and take a hack at it. The boss finally collapses.

"Sherry, which monster appears on 15th floor?"
"The monster native to 15th floor of Quratar's labyrinth is Grass Bee."
"Grass Bee? Then we don't have to waste time on trying to fight against one. Roxanne, find groups."
"Understood."

We proceed to 15th floor and encounter a group of monsters.
Two Grass Bees and two Hat Bats.

"Breeze Storm."

I take them out in six wind spells.
Six spells huh?
They'll obviously grow stronger with every level.
Although higher floors are more difficult, I can't stay on lower floors. I have to level up quickly.

I have no support from party jobs either.
Roxanne is beast warrior, Sherry is master smith, Miria is diver. None of their jobs has ‘Increase in Intelligence’ effect.
If there was an ‘Increase in Intelligence’ effect in party jobs, wouldn’t it become easier?

Should I change Sherry’s job to Monk or Shrine Maiden?
If I do that, however, it’ll become difficult when I use Durandal.
Isn’t there a two-in-one job?
Because I have to be in close quarters to use Durandal, I can’t afford to prolong battles.

I carry on as is.
In the next battle, both Sherry and Miria receive attacks.
They received hits because battles have now become protracted.

“Since battles are now taking longer to end, you may receive attacks. Will you be fine? Heal.”

I ask while casting Heal.

“I’ll be fine.”
“Are you sure? Heal.”
“Yes, I’ll be fine.”
“Okay.”
“Alright. Heal.”

Both Sherry and Miria assert that they’ll be fine.

“I’m fine now.”
“Alright. Miria, it’s your turn now. Because I’m in the back anyway, you take my Poison Resistant Hard Leather Cap, Sherry. Heal.”
“Are you sure about this?”
“You’ll be taking on Grass Bees from the front, so it’ll be of more use to you. Heal.”

Sherry and Miria both have recovered fully.
Without Skip Incantation, I feel like I’m a different person.

At the moment, we have only one equipment that has Poison Resistance skill.
Roxanne has tremendous ability to dodge. Although Miria fights energetically, I'm still concerned about her.
But there's only one, so it can't be helped.
I exhange caps with Sherry.

We have yet to encounter a group with three or more Grass Bees.
Miria receives an attack.

"Aaaagh!"

Miria groans.
It's poison.
Because I have been through this, I know.
I bring out antidote pill.

"Roxanne, I'll entrust her to you."
"Yes."

I cast fifth Breeze Storm and put the antidote pill in my mouth.
I pull Miria into my embrace.
And put my lips on hers.
I shove my tongue in to open her mouth.

I push the antidote pill into her mouth
Miria's tongue is trembling.
I gently entwine my tongue with hers.

I keep my tongue entwined with Miria's.
It moves.
For the first time, Miria moves her tongue passionately.

I want her to do that from now on but I'm afraid to say that out loud.
While Miria was in my embrace, a Grass Bee hurls itself on me.
If I get hit with its needle, I may receive poison as well.

"Breeze Storm."

I separate my mouth from Miria's and cast sixth spell.

Chapter 93 - Wanted man

Author note: The thieves defeated on Haruba's 12th floor included a bandit that I changed to a pirate.

I asked Roxanne to find a place with a group that includes carniverous plants.
After shooting down a Grass Bee with six wind spells, I finished the Fly Trap off with three [Fire ball]'s.
I hadn't experienced a long battle like that before.

"One Saracenia or Fly Trap would be good, can you find somewhere like that?"
"Just one might be difficult."
"Probably."
"Going up to the 16th floor might be better."

Sherry makes a suggestion, and Roxanne seems to agree.
They seem to be in high spirits.

"What is on the 16th floor?"
"The 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth has the Bitch Butterfly. Wind magic is its weakness. The Hat Bat can be defeated with wind magic as well, so the 16th floor might be easier than the 15th."

I see.
It's a decent idea.
As expected of Sherry.

The Bitch Butterfly is the demon that appears on the 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.
The Grass Bee is the demon from the 15th floor.
The Hat Bat is the demon from the 14th floor.
So wind magic is the weakness of the main three monsters that appear on the 16th floor?

The chances of Saracenia and Fly Trap appearing decrease a lot after the 15th floor.
Will it be easy if I just have to use wind magic?

“That’s fine. We’ll see how well we can handle the 15th floor for a while, and then move onto the 16th floor.”
“I think that’s good.”

It’s dangerous to go suddenly, so we’ll take our time.
The number of attacks received increases on the 15th floor.
The Hat Bat avoids the vanguard, and hits me.
It shakes our stability.

I take out Durandal, and exchange hats with Sherry.
I used [Heal], so my MP has decreased quicker than expected.

My experience gain decreases because I’ve taken out Durandal.
When we go up a floor, we get more experience, but I take out Durandal more often as well, so the experience falls.
I’m not sure if there is any profit going up in floors.

“Roxanne, can you find somewhere with a variety of demons?”

When my MP completely recovered, I asked Roxanne.

“Well, I can smell a place with four kinds of demons.”

The 15th floor can have four or less demons, so four is the maximum possible.
I had forgotten it.
Up to five demons can appear on the 16th floor.
Is the 16th floor difficult?

No. If I use area effect magic, the numbers won’t be a problem.
Roxanne is up front, so it should be alright.
Because I can defeat more in one go, will the 16th floor be more profitable for experience?

Grass Bee, Hat Bat, Fly Trap, and Sarracenia. To this group, I give them a [Meteor Crash].

A scorching rock flies through the cave.
All the demons except Grass Bee are defeated.

Only the Grass Bee isn't defeated?
Wind magic is the weakness of Grass Bee, and it was not defeated.
Fire magic is the weakness of Fly Trap and Sarracenia, and they were defeated.
But the Hat Bat was defeated, I don't know why.

We finished hunting without going to the 16th floor that day.
It is dangerous to advance too fast.
Going to the 16th floor tomorrow morning is fine.

Explorer has risen to Lv38.
I can use [Incantation omission] if I go up another one.

When I return to the house, a message from the broker Luke is there.

"It's written that he has made a successful bid of 5,400 nars for the kobold monster card, and he'd like you to come at once."

Roxanne reads the memo.
It's the kobold monster card.
Why does he need me to come immediately?

"Ok, I'll be gone for a bit. Can you three prepare dinner?"
"Certainly. Have a safe trip."
"Please be careful with the broker."

I went to the merchants guild.
When I asked for Luke at the reception, they took me through right away.
I met him in the small room for business discussions.

"Sorry for calling you out. First of all, the kobold monster card."
"Sure."

Luke takes out the monster card.
After I confirmed it with [Analyze], I pay the 59 silver coins which includes the commission.

Luke only delivers genuine articles.
It seems I can trust him as a broker.

“The previous successful bid on the kobold monster card was 5,400 nars as well. It was previously taken by people who had been watching me bid. If I keep making successful bids at the same price it becomes troublesome.”
“There’s a problem like that too?”

Being a broker seems to be quite troublesome.
If you know another group will put up a fight til 5,400, then you know you won’t make a successful bid at 5,300.
There seems to be some difficult bargaining.

“Therefore, I had to bid the maximum price this time.”

I don’t know if I should be pleased about it.
The other party now knows our best planned price is 5,400.

“Well, that might do for kobold monster cards for now.”
“Ok. I’ve also received a message from the Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy. They would like you to come immediately.”

The Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy wants me to come there immediately?
Did they sell the mirrors?

“The Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy, I understand.”
“I’ve finished passing the message on.”

I’ve received the kobold monster card, and I leave the merchants guild.
I was thinking about ordering the ant monster card, but I didn’t.
It’s definitely not enough to just have it on one hat.
I want to arrange for some more poison resistant equipment.

But it will take time between ordering it, and obtaining it.
When we get the ant monster card, I don’t know which floor we’ll be fighting on.
There might not be any demons that use poison there.
I might regret not preparing any, so I could save some for later.

When I get home, I prepare the bath.
Today was strenuous, so I want to relax.
I finished up early, and also visited Luke.

After dinner, Sherry does her smithing.
I got the kobold monster card, so we merged it with the rabbit monster card.
The skill of [Incantation interruption] is put on Sherry's spear.
This will be useful.

All of today's work is now finished, and I climbed into the bath.
Miria floats in the hot water.
I peek at her from the surface of the water.
It is quite pleasant.

Roxanne and Sherry are to either side of me.
Comfortable.
I am.

"It feels good in the bath after today's events."
"Yes. It's the best."

The best part is Roxanne's tail.
In the hot water, I put my arm under Roxanne's body.
I like the feeling of her tail.
When I lightly hold her body and pull it close, a rich swelling presses against my chest.

"Is Miria comfortable as well?"
"Yes-desu."

Miria gives a reply.
It's a happy thing.
She floats around the bath tub.
She floats without being tied down by anything.

The bathtub isn't especially wide.
Miria's tail touches my foot.
Two mountains are floating.

“Miria, can you make the fish dish with the pan we bought the other day soon?”

When Roxanne translates it, a great force flies at me.
It’s right on top of me.
A face is near.

“I could do it-desu.”
“In this case it’s ‘I can do it’.”
“I can do it-desu.”

My important thing struck Miria’s smooth stomach.
Miria doesn’t seem to be bothered by it at all.
She is looking into my face hard.

“How about dinner, the day after tomorrow.”
“I can do it-desu.”

She left again after she got the answer out of me.
I’m the guy with the money.

The promise to serve fish is done, and I can see Miria is pleased.
Two days from now is good.

Tomorrow is too soon.
Four or five days would be too long.
For the day after tomorrow, we should be able to hold out til then.

The kiss of the day has returned to the regular light kiss.
Was the passion in the mouth to mouth transfer of the antidote a one time thing?
It’s alright because I can at least enjoy a passionate kiss with Roxanne.

It was the same the next morning.
I don’t think I can expect a passionate kiss from Miria.
After kissing three people, we head to Haruba’s 12th floor.
It might be good to fight against the boss of the Grass Bee on the 12th floor.

We teleported to the room that contained the thieves.
It would be bad if someone saw me using [Dungeon walk] in Haruba

though.
When that time comes, I can just make Sherry an explorer.

We searched around the room.
When we passed into the right hand room, it was the boss room.
Just as we thought.

The thieves made their trap near the boss room.
When a strong party comes through, they'll let them continue to the boss room.
It's still early in the morning, and there is nobody in the waiting room.

"The boss of Grass Bee is Killer Bee. You need to watch out for poison, and it will use its poison skill as well."

It's still using poison?
Sherry's weapon now has [Incantation interruption], so our anti-skill measures are perfect.

I kill the Grass Bee first, and then join the offensive against the boss.
The boss is focused on Roxanne, and can't hit her.
The boss is defeated easily.

We've defeated the 12th, 13th, and 14th floor bosses in Quratar.
A 12th floor boss is an easy victory.

We left the 13th floor of Haruba without fighting, and moved to the 15th floor of Quratar.
It's good that we can challenge it after already experiencing one earlier.
We head towards the boss room relying on the map.

"Can you Miria?"

Miria is sent off.
Miria checks the waiting room, and calls us.
There doesn't seem to be anyone this early in the morning.

We don't relax, even though we've won once.
The Killer Bee was defeated as carefully and quickly as possible.

“The demon on Quratar’s 16th floor is the Bitch Butterfly. Wind magic is its weakness. It is resistant to fire magic. It might try and use its paralyze skill when you approach.”
“It has the paralyze skill? It’s good that we prepared Sherry’s weapon in time.”
“Yes, I’ll do my best.”

The Bitch Butterfly is a huge moth more so than a butterfly.
It flies about noisily, and even though it’s elegant it isn’t pretty.
It’s a worthless demon.

Its movement is a little slow.
The [Breeze ball] successfully hit.
I defeated it with seven wind spells.

“Roxanne, wind magic is effective. Can you guide us to places with only Grass Bee, Hat Bat and Bitch Butterfly?”
“I think so.”

It seems like it’s going according to Sherry’s plan.
For the time being we’ll fight on Quratar’s 16th floor.
It’s difficult, but we handle it somehow.
We just hunted on the 16th floor during the morning.

We finish hunting and return to the house.
I ask the three girls to prepare breakfast, and I head to Bode alone.
I appeared from the wall in the lobby.

“Is the Duke or Knight Captain here?”
“Yes, I think that the Duke is in his workroom.”

I ask their whereabouts from a Knight, and enter inside.
It’s the house of another person.
They don’t seem to have gone out yet, because it’s early.
I head down the passage to the workroom.

“Enter.”

When I knocked at the door, there was a voice in answer.
It’s Gozer’s voice.

“It’s Michio, I heard you were calling for me?”
“Oh, Michio? It’s good that you came.”

When I enter, the duke speaks as well while sitting in the chair.

“Well.”
“Actually there might be some trouble.”
“First of all, please sit.”

The duke is hasty, like usual.
I sat on the sofa, following Gozer’s instructions.

“Now for the troublesome thing.”
“Do you know of a thief called Heinz the Bandit?”

Gozer sits in front of me and asks.

“No.”
“He’s a rough thief that likes to see blood. I heard he got the job of bandit at the shrine of lies and truth at Helene. I don’t know if that’s true. Anyway, I’ve heard he is a strong opponent.”

The bandit I defeated?
I’m sure his name was Heinz.
Was I called about that thief?

“That sort of thief.”
“He’s a thief who is originally from the Selmar territory. He killed some members of Selmer’s order of knights. Heinz also has a pirate subordinate named Simon who uses a one handed sword. He also caused trouble for Selmer’s order of knights. Even without magic they are able to oppose the order of knights.”

Simon is the man I killed with [MP full release].
I’m sure he had the job of pirate.
It seems that he was good with the sword.

“The thief has entered your territory?”
“It’s not certain, but the information seems reasonably good. They might attack a village somewhere, or lie in wait in a labyrinth. Labyrinths don’t

leave any remains behind when you kill someone, so murderers like Heinz favor them. There are three labyrinths in our territory. I think we need to consider this possibility."

No damage has been confirmed.
After Heinz sets a trap, it might take a while.
How quick did they get the information after he entered their territory.
The information network of the order of knights seems to be pretty good.

"This being the case, we want to look after you Michio."
"You contacted me to let me know? Thank you for that."

Though the information is a bit slow.
I've already defeated them.

But, I can't say that I've defeated them.
Then I might have to take out my intelligence card.
I'll have to worry about that for a while.
Even though the order if knights is being vigilant for no reason, it's not anything too bad.

"Bode's labyrinth especially might need caution."
"Bode, I see."
"Heinz is an elf, but he seems to have many human subordinates. That's the information we have. Tare and Haruba would draw attention because there are lots of elves near, so if Heinz was to enter a labyrinth I think Bode is the most likely candidate."

Heinz was in Haruba's labyrinth.
He outsmarted them.

"So you think he's in Bode."
"It's possible, so we'll let you enter labyrinths elsewhere for a while if you wish."
"There will be patrols through our labyrinths, and people from the order of knights may ask to inspect your parties intelligence cards."
"I understand."

That's bad.
I don't know if I should keep quiet about defeating the thieves.

They said I could enter other labyrinths, so should I hole myself up in Quratar's labyrinth for a while?

Chapter 94 - Narihira

“Here it comes.”

Roxanne’s voice resounds.
Orange magic formation appears under a Grass Bee in the second row.
Sherry’s spear won’t be able to reach that far.

The Grass Bee shoots a needle.
Roxanne receives it with her steel shield.
At the same time, a Hat Bat and a Bitch Butterfly launch their attacks on Roxanne.
Roxanne gets on her left foot and maneuvers upper half of her body to dodge body slam of the Bitch Butterfly, simultaneously swaying her head to dodge the surging Hat Bat.

From the back, I invoke fifth Breeze Storm.
The bodies of the monsters stumble under the gusts of wind.

The Bitch Butterfly regains its balance and launches another attack on Roxanne.
Roxanne parries it with her shield and twists her body to dodge the onrushing Hat Bat.
While dodging, she hits it with her rapier.

I cast sixth spell.
Orange magic formation appears under the Bitch Butterfly which Sherry was confronting.
Sherry pokes it with her spear.
Miria receives the bee’s attack with her shield and slashes with her scimitar.

Roxanne side steps another attack of the Bitch Butterfly.
After evading the Hat Bat’s attack with ease, I invoke Breeze Storm for a seventh time.
Two Bitch Butterflies, two Grass Bees and a Hat Bat drop down.

“Uh-huh, I knew 16th floor would be difficult.”

Although I have obtained the Duke’s permission to stay in Quratar’s labyrinth for the time being, it’s difficult to hunt on 16th floor.

Roxanne is, as always, able to dodge their attacks without much trouble.
Still, it seems difficult.

Because we have already cleared 13th, 14th and 15th floors, however, it can't be helped.
If it weren't for Roxanne holding the frontline and dodging their attacks, we would have long been wiped out.

"Not at all. It's not that difficult."

It's not that difficult?
She's terrifying as ever.
Only thing going in our favor is that most of the monsters on 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth are weak against wind magic.
It's again thanks to Roxanne that we can search for monsters that are weak against wind magic.

"I'm not exposed to successive attacks, so I can hold my own. Compared to the standards of labyrinth, these battles are not heated yet. They're warm at best."

If even Sherry says so, I wonder if it really is so.
Like I thought, people of this world don't act cautiously.
Because Roxanne aggros most of the monsters in the center of the front, Sherry and Miria find it relatively easier on the sides.

"Fine. Have sister."

Even Miria is aware of it.

"It's indeed all thanks to Roxanne."
"Not at all. It's because master takes all the monsters out with his magic."
"Alright then, because I'll be using my sword next, find fewer monsters."

After hunting on 16th floor, my Explorer job has leveled up to Lv39.
Because I have one more bonus point to spend, I use it to upgrade Short Incantation to Incantation Omission.
It's great to have both four jobs and Incantation Omission at the same time.

I recover my MP and carry on hunting.
We encounter a group of four Bitch Butterflies and a Grass Bee.
This combination is the most difficult on 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

Nope. The most difficult combination would be that of monsters which are weak against wind magic and carnivorous plants which are weak against fire magic.
We keep at it, however, because Roxanne can dodge their attacks with ease.
I have yet to receive their attacks.

The reason why I said that four Bitch Butterflies are difficult is that Sherry's spear may not be enough.
Bitch Butterfly's skill is capable of inflicting paralysis.
If Roxanne were to become paralyzed, it would lead to total collapse.

If there are two Bitch Butterflies, there won't be any problem.
Even three are manageable.
But four or more are beyond our capability.

The Grass Bee launches its ranged attack.
When there are four monsters, they often form two rows.
If there are five, one of them does go to the second row.

The Grass Bee shoots a needle from the second row.

This is why a group of four Bitch Butterflies and a Grass Bee is the most difficult on this floor.
I wonder if I should have bought more anti-paralysis pills.
But there hasn't been a single opportunity to use even that one pill which I have.

We finish hunting without having to use the anti-paralysis pills.
Next day. Early morning. We resume hunting on 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

"Here it comes."

Roxanne cautions us and receives the needle of a Grass Bee with her shield.
Exceptional body balance.

She stabs the Grass Bee with her rapier while dodging body slam of a Bitch Butterfly.

Dodging the butterfly like a butterfly. Stabbing the bee like a bee.
She's terrifyingly strong.

Sherry evades a butterfly's attack.
Miria receives a bee's attack with her shield.
The bee in the second row activates its skill again.

Roxanne parries it with her shield with ease.
The Bitch Butterfly launches another attack. Roxanne sways her body lightly and dodges it.

The Grass Bee launches an attack on Miria.
Miria dodges it.
However, the attack of the bee, which Miria dodged, was received by me who was standing behind her.
Although I received the attack, I don't seem to have been poisoned.

I continue to cast spells.
When I don't use Durandal, I lend my Poison Resistant Hard Leather Cap to Miria.
Sherry is responsible to keep Bitch Butterflies from using their skills.
Therefore, she confronts Bitch Butterflies.

I cast Heal on Miria while launching wind magic attack.
We have reached the level where we can afford to take two to three attacks from monsters.
I switch my focus between attacking and healing.
I take the monsters out with wind spell.

"Okay."

Miria gestures with her hand that she's fine, so I stop.
I ask of Roxanne to search for more monsters.
There are two Bitch Butterflies and two Grass Bees in the next group we encounter.
Sherry comes under a butterfly's attack but takes it out in the end.

After healing her, I pull Durandal out.
Killing two more groups of monsters, I fully recover my MP.
It's wasteful to use strengthening pill in this situation.

Next group comprises two Bitch Butterflies, two Grass Bees and a Hat Bat.
The Hat Bat flies past Roxanne.
I somehow manage to ward it off using my wand.
After several Breeze Storms, all the monsters drop down.

For a rearguard, Hat Bat is a nuisance for it can bypass vanguard.
The next group is made up of a Grass Bee and four Bitch Butterflies.
Although it's the most difficult combination, I feel rather relieved that there's no Hat Bat.

The Grass Bee launches its ranged attack. Roxanne receives it with her shield.
Her defense is impregnable.
One long range attack of a mere Grass Bee can't break it.

Bitch Butterflies close in.
All four of them are lined up in one row.
Roxanne lightly dodges body slam of one of the butterflies.
She receives the attack of the second with her shield.

Third one was trying to activate skill but Sherry interrupts it.
Can we keep this up?

While I was sighing in relief, orange magic formation appears under the fourth Bitch Butterfly.
Sherry won't be able to make it in time.
I can't cast another wind spell until previous attack cools down.
Sherry was able to successfully interrupt third butterfly's skill but the fourth one's activates.

The Bitch Butterfly emits smoke of powder from its wings.
The butterfly that activated the skill is closer to Miria than Sherry.
The smoke of powder envelops Miria.

Miria stops moving.
Her body stiffens.
I observe her body while casting another wind spell. It's not moving the

slightest.
Is this paralysis?

“Should I give her the pill?”
“We should exterminate the monsters first.”

On Sherry’s advice, I cast another Breeze Storm.
A Bitch Butterfly approaches to attack Miria.
Because Miria was paralyzed, she couldn’t dodge it.

I cast Heal and take the monsters out with another wind spell.
The monsters drop down.

“How much time will paralysis take to wear off?”

I look at Miria.
She’s still unable to move.
Should I take the anti-paralysis pill out of my Item Box?

“It should not take much time. It will be better to use the pill during battle. If it takes too much time, we can use the pill then. For now, we can simply move her to a safe room.”
“There doesn’t seem to be any monster nearby.”

Sherry and Roxanne give their input.
Should I give her the pill mouth-to-mouth?
Or should I wait some more?

I-It’s not like I want to do mouth-to-mouth.
Because she’s paralyzed, she won’t be able to return it passionately.

Besides, it’s not a good habit to force yourself upon people who can’t move.
I imagine pulling Miria into my embrace, putting my lips on hers and shoving my tongue into her mouth. It feels like I’m abusing her.
Because she can’t offer any resistance.

Th-This…
I should try this sometime.
Uh-huh

While I was lost in my fantasy, Miria moves.
She blinks her eyes.

“Ah, are you fine?”
“Fine. Sorry.”
“Don’t apologize.”

I was indulged in my fantasy for too long, it seems. Miria has recovered from paralysis.
Next time, I’ll be sure to give her the pill mouth-to-mouth.
I’m regretting to have let this opportunity slip.

There doesn’t seem to be any apparent aftereffect.
When paralysis wore off, Miria stood up normally.
We carry on hunting in usual manner.
We finish today’s hunting without getting paralyzed again.

“Fish, desu. Quick, desu.”

After we were done with hunting, we head to the fishmonger.
We will be making fish in the new pan today.

“Which fish should we make today?”
“White fish.”

Miria says after closely examining every fish at the fishmonger.
There doesn’t seem to be any better fish available.

“Is there anything else you need?”
“She says that she needs slime starch.”

I ask after buying two white fish. Roxanne translates.
You might think that I bought two white fish because of 30% discount.
But I did it due to Miria’s appetite.

Slime starch is the item dropped by Gummy Slime.
I buy it from the guild and return home.

Miria first pours some water and wine in the pan, then adds fish sauce and olive oil.

I leave the white fish to boil along with other ingredients which I had prepared beforehand.
A rather ordinary recipe.

“What do you need this slime starch for?”
“This, desu.”

Miria shaves the slime starch.
She dissolves it in water and adds a small quantity of the solution into the pan.
Is it some kind of seasoning?
It seems to be her secret ingredient.

Nope, it’s something else.
I realize it when it was served.
It’s sauce.
Is slime starch same as potato starch?

I give one whole white fish to Miria and slice the other one into three pieces.
One-third is more than enough.
Even if I leave some over, I’m sure Miria will clean it up.
I eat the boiled fish with the sauce which Miria prepared.

“It’s really delicious.”

Although the recipe was simple, it’s not bad.
It’s quite tasty.

It has rustic taste perhaps due to starch sauce.
It’ll taste even better if I dilute it with some sugar and wine.
Sweet and sour sauce, to be precise.

“Have eaten, desu.”

Miria seems satisfied.
It seems she has had her fill for she didn’t snatch Roxanne’s, Sherry’s or mine.
We can do without fish for some time, i guess.

Next morning. I try to add wine and sugar to Miria's starch sauce.
I boil some water, and then add sugar, wine, fish sauce and slime starch.
I make stir-fried vegetables and serve it with sweet and sour starch sauce.

Uh-huh
Just like sweet and sour pork except there's no pork.
Had I added pork, it would have been just like sweet and sour pork.
I didn't go with pork and added vegetables instead because I was afraid that it might end up in failure.

"It's really tasty, Master."
"It's sweet and sour at the same time. I haven't eaten anything like it. It's delicious."
"Tasty, desu."

I receive compliments from the three, even though it's not sweet and sour pork.
In my honest opinion, it's lacking.

But I won't be discouraged by this failure.
I'll use slime starch in even more dishes.
Because I now understand how to make starch sauce and I have tried it already, I have lost interest in it.
I soak some goat meat in fish sauce and leave it to marinate.

"Miria, can you please shave some slime starch?"
"Yes, desu."

Evening. I receive starch from Miria upon returning home.

"A message from luke, the broker. There seemed to be a successful bid for Caterpillar Monster Card."

When we return home, there was a note at the entrance.
With Caterpillar Monster Card, we can make another Sacrificial Misanga.
It'll be third.
If we count the Ring of Determination, we will have four accessories. One for everyone.

Let's leave it for tomorrow.
I dredge goat meat in starch and deep-fry it.
Hokkaido cuisine, zangi. Otherwise known as tatsuta-age. (TN: Tatsuta-age is a Japanese cuisine which is called Zangi in Hokkaido.)

But it's not as red.
It's more crimson than red.
It's probably darker in color due to fish sauce.
It doesn't look so good.

When I try it, however, it tastes good.
Well, there were not many steps involved in the recipe, so it couldn't go wrong.
It's satisfactory.

Well, even in modern Japan, I had never seen tatsuta-age much.
Impassionate gods have never seen the red that is the Tatsuta River. (TN: From a poem by Ariwara no Narihira. You must have already noticed the wordplay by the author.)
This would do for now.

Chapter 95 - Bounty

Next morning. After having breakfast, I jump to the merchants guild.
I ask the three of them to do the dishes and cleaning.
I don't want people at the guild to find out that Sherry is a master smith.
And about the possibility of fusion once I get the monster card.

"Here, Caterpillar Monster Card."
"Indeed."

I had already confirmed that it's the real thing before receiving it.
Still, I don't know when Luke will try to pass me a fake.

I wonder what I will do if he does that.
Since Luke has relationship with the order of Harz duchy knights, I don't think he will try to do that.
Does he know that I'm trying to claim indemnity?

Well, considering the procedure, it is more troublesome to produce a fake.
Still, I should better verify the card with the guild temple sometime, so that Luke doesn't get any strange idea.
Also, I would like to check the guild temple for once at least.

"And here, these are wanted posters of bandits. The order of Harz duchy knights entrusted me with these. They wish for you to be careful."

Luke hands me the papyrus.
Although these are wanted posters, there's no portrait drawn.
Only a description is written in Brahim language.

Are these bounties assigned by the order of Harz duchy knights?
Even though they have already been defeated.
It looks like I made them waste their money.

I receive both the monster card and the wanted posters, and return home.
I pass the misanga and the monster card to Sherry.

"What is that?"
"Wanted posters of pirates."

I take out the wanted posters.
Sherry glances at the posters from the side and reads.

“It is for Heinz the bandit and Simon the mad dog.”
“Simon the mad dog, you say?”

Roxanne cries in surprise.

“Do you know him?”
“Yes. He is a famous pirate from wolfkin tribe. I heard he is quite strong and is second to none in using one-handed sword. However, I heard that he was defeated by someone when I was a kid, so he doesn’t seem to be invincible. I would really like to fight against him sometime.”

Actually, you have already fought against him.
Still, she says terrifying things so calmly.

“Well, it is impossible now. They are the same thieves we defeated in Haruba’s labyrinth earlier.”
“The thieves from the other day?”
“Most likely.”
“That reminds me, one of the thieves was a wolfman. If so, was he Simon the mad dog? Then, this rapier…”

Roxanne looks at the rapier in her hand.

In comparison to his name, the weapon of Simon is shabby.
May be he was hiding better weapons somewhere else?
Or was he only an ordinary pirate?
Even Kobou made mistakes with his brush huh?

“Don’t think about it.

“To defeat Simon the mad dog, as expected of Master.”

Assuming the pirate we defeated was Simon, he was defeated by magic.
That would be a foul play.
Rather, I should say that I am lucky I didn’t fight him with sword.

In the meantime, Sherry fuses the monster card.
She successfully creates a Sacrificial Misanga.

“You did it, as expected of Sherry.”
“Thank you.”

Sherry hands over the Sacrificial Misanga.
I receive it.

“This is for Sherry to wear. Where do you want to wear it?”
“I will put it on my foot.”
“Got it. Show me your foot.”

I tie the Sacrificial Misanga around Sherry’s ankle.
Small and delicate feet.
She is so cute.

There’s more thread left even after I bind it.
It is so because her foot is small.

“The order of Harz duchy knights seem to be quite troubled. They are not gonna check Intelligence Card when they pay the reward money.”

While I was folding the misanga around her ankle to tie it fittingly, Sherry voices her opinion.

“You think so?”
“It is written in the posters.”

They are not gonna check Intelligence Card?
If my job will not be verified, I can immediately turn in the thieves’ Intelligence Cards.
But why?

“They are not gonna do the verification?”
“I don’t think so. If they do that, other thieves will not bring the Intelligence Cards next time.”
“Oh, so this is in order to make other thieves bring the cards?”
“The one, who knows best where a thief is and what he is doing, is a fellow

thief. If you pay them appropriately, they will kill anyone, even a thief. It is a technique that was used in the past when a strong thief appeared."

Using a snake to bite a snake?
Indeed. Only a thief knows thieves' ways best.
Let a thief kill another thief. It is more efficient.

In other words, the current bounty system, which doesn't allow rewarding a thief, protects thieves from betrayal of fellow thieves.
If a fellow thief's card can be encashed, then this will prevent thieves from forming groups.
They will kill each other quietly for reward. It will cause them to doubt each other. It will definitely help reduce the number of bandits.

"Err… then why do they check the cards and don't use this method instead?"
"Certainly, I think it is better to hand over the prize money regardless of who brings the Intelligence Card. But the Empire's laws prevent rewarding thieves since it will financially benefit them."

Sherry seems to be in favor of rewarding thieves with the bounty.
After all, it is rational.
Especially, if you think about the current security standards of this world.

However, it may only be effective for a short period of time. I'm not sure if it will work in long term.
Back in Edo period in Japan, they allowed gamblers to take control roles as well. I wonder if it went well.
They said that such special treatment caused the formation of gangs.
I have heard that the origin of foreign mafia was a self-controlled aid organization in Sicily.

Even if the knights don't have enough power to deal with thieves right now, what will happen in the future when they do?
This may lead to undesired custom.
In that case, it will be better not to pay bounty to the thieves.

Next morning. I head to Bode with the Intelligence Cards.
I can encash these cards immediately if there is no verification of my Intelligence Card.

The thieves have already been defeated.
The more the time passes, the more the inconsistent information may spread.
The sooner it is done, the more difficult for inconsistencies to arise.
I hope that it will not be suspicious to claim the bounty only a day after the wanted posters were out.

My Explorer job just reached Lv 41.
Most likely, the higher the level goes up, the more the experience points will be needed to level up.
Right now, Miria is Diver Lv30. She has caught up with Roxanne's Lv31 Beast Warrior and Sherry's Lv31 Master Smith.
However, I don't believe the experience points needed to level from Lv1 to Lv30 are the same as the experience points needed to level from Lv30 to Lv31.

Or perhaps there is an range of levels?
Even if I defeat a Lv16 monster on 16th floor of the labyrinth, I probably won't even receive half as much experience as defeating a Lv40 monster.

I don't completely understand the mechanics of leveling up.
Even though I have selected Hero job, it is still at Lv37.
It is certain that the pace of leveling up differs for each job.

In any case, it seems It will take quite some time to get Explorer job to Lv50.
It is not a good idea to wait until I get Adventure job.
It is better to get over with it quickly.

It's also useless to bring Heinz's Intelligence Card to anyone other than the order of Harz duchy knights.
Also, I will get to hear from the Duke as to why the bounty was assigned to Heinz the bandit.
If there is a story behind it, might as well hear it.

Having taken the worst-case scenario into account, I warp to Bode's adventurers guild through the guild wall.
I enter the city of Bode and head to the Duke's castle.
If they ask to check my Intelligence Card, I can make excuse that I am still searching.
I hand the Intelligence Cards to a knight I know.

“Please wait a little. I will go and call the leader.”

The knight head to the back.
Not calling him would have made me happier.
Am I asking too much to just receive the reward?

I also considered aiming for a time when the Duke and Gozer wouldn’t be around.
But it will lead to more troubles later on.
If I went to Bode at an inappropriate time, and got myself involved in an incident, I might get arrested.
If I appear at usual time, take usual attitude and behave as if there is scheduled appointment, wouldn’t it look like there is nothing special going on?

After a while, Gozer appears.

“Michio dono, have you perhaps brought the Intelligence Cards?”
“I was attacked the other day.”
“Actually, we found a place yesterday on 12th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth where protective cement was used.”
“Oh, it was probably the same place.”

Apparently, they have already found the location where the thieves set up ambush.
Just in time.
I am glad that I brought the cards today.

Also, it was correct decision to come here at usual time.
If I brought the cards at inappropriate time, they would have thought that I came here immediately after defeating the thieves.

“Is that so? I found it strange when we found the location of ambush but there were no thieves around. So I thought that they had already been defeated.”

Gozer explains.
That is exactly what happened.
That’s great. This will also serve as an evidence that I visit the labyrinths in the territory of Harz duchy, as I promised with the Duke.

“Leader.”
“How did it go?”
“One of the cards belongs to Heinz.”

The knight comes back, and speaks with Gozer.
So it really was Heinz the bandit’s gang.

“There is no mistake?”
“Yes.”
“Well then, Michio dono, please come inside.”

After having confirmed with the knight, Gozer invites me inside.

“Okay.”

I follow him inside the castle.
I was escorted to a location I had never visited before.

“Are you alright after fighting with Heinz’s gang?”
“Somehow.”
“To be able to defeat Heinz’s gang, I am really surprised. It really is a great accomplishment.”
“Well, I managed to defeat them somehow.”

Gozar and I talk as we walk through the castle’s corridors.
Unfortunately, there was no Intelligence Card for the pirate who exploded.
That pirate must have been the strongest in Heinz’s gang.
It would have been better had his Intelligence Card remained intact.

“The person who defeated Heinz is Michio dono?”

Gozar brings me to a room where the Duke of Harz was waiting.

“It appears so.”
“Oh, as expected of the person I have taken notice of. Are you alright?”
“Yes.”

To even defeat a formidable foe, my impression to the Duke seems to have improved even more.

“Last is Elmer’s. No card of Simon?”

There is a white box inside the room.
The intelligence cards were placed inside the box.
There was a knight who was reading the contents of the Intelligence Cards.

There is nothing written on the Intelligence Cards regarding how or when they died.
Is this device used to read the cards?

“Simon’s Intelligence Card is not there? But Heinz’s card is there, right?
Great job, Michio dono. By the way, had Heinz’s job advanced to Bandit?”
“Heinz’s Intelligence Card is there, right?”

Gozer repeats after the Duke.
I did bring the bandit’s Intelligence Card with me.
Apparently, it was Heinz’s.
Then the pirate was Simon.

“Yes, Leader. Heinz’s Intelligence Card is here.”
“And there is no Intelligence Card of Simon?”
“That’s right.”

Gozar talks with the knight.

“Do you have any idea where he could be, Michio dono?”
“There was one thief the card of whom I couldn’t collect. He was quite strong.”

I can’t say I killed him.
It may lead to the question as to how I managed to kill such formidable pirates.
And I have no evidence to show that I killed him.

“So Michio dono didn’t kill Simon? Was Simon perhaps on another errand alone? Or may be they split up? Or could he be hiding somewhere else?”
“There will be no threat to Selmar territory if it’s only Simon who escaped. I will not allow him to have his way in my territory.”
“That’s right but…”

Gozer seems to be troubled.
He is concerned about Simon's whereabouts since it is his responsibility as knight leader to maintain peace and security.
You don't need to be worried, Gozer.

"This is the bounty."

The knight standing next to the box operates it.
Money comes out of the box.
Does this device also serve as a safe?

"Is this the first time you are seeing where the guild temple money comes from, Michio dono?"

The Duke questions me.
Was it showing on my face?

"It is, yes."
"It belongs to the knights guild's temple, and a knight is appointed to carry the duties here. It is possible to conduct the ceremony to change the job to Knight right now, if Michio dono wishes to become a knight. Want to give it a try?"

I try to use Appraisal on the box.
Certainly, it belongs to the guild temple.
Is this place the guild temple?

It's easy for me because I have Job Settings, but in general the job change ceremony is performed in the guild temple.
To become a knight, it is probably necessary to visit the temple of the knights guild.

"No."
"Well, you rarely find an adventurer who intends to turn into a knight. Also, it takes years of training as a warrior before you can become a knight. There's no substitute to years of training. If Michio dono could become a knight just like that, I would be in a bind."

The Duke laughs.
It was a joke, it seems.
Humor has never been a strong point of mine.

The condition to become a knight is to level Warrior job up to Lv30 after all.
I select Warrior job when I want to use [Rush]. Currently, it is at Lv29.
A little more to Lv30.

“Here it is.”

The knight hands the money to the Duke in a drawstring bag.

“You can exchange Intelligence Card for reward in any of the knights guild’s temple. This really is a convenient device.”
“I see.”
“But it is less than I thought.”

The Duke questions as he checks the bag he received from the knight.

“It may indeed be less. Although Heinz the bandit rampaged badly in Selmar territory, Simon has yet to be taken care of.”
“It does seem to be less. I heard that some members of the order of knights were done in by Simon alone. May be they assigned more bounty to Simon, Michio dono.”

The Duke seems convinced by Gozer’s explanation. He passes the money to me.
Like they announced, there doesn’t seem to be any verification of Intelligence Card.
I am disappointed that I couldn’t collect Simon’s Intelligence Card for the reward.

Chapter 96 - Unreasonable Demand

I respectfully receive the reward.

“Although I arranged a special case with the Emperor’s council to not check Intelligence Card, it was in vain.”

The Duke says.
Well, it was surely not in vain.
Don’t tell me that he is going to ask me to have my card checked now?

“Did you negotiate directly with the Emperor or his council office?”
“It was difficult convincing them but I finally managed to convince them that it is best using thieves to catch thieves. Don’t you agree, Michio dono?”

The Duke and Sherry seem to have same opinion.
However, as it turned out, the Duke was hasty with this idea.

“Well, in short term, it seems fine.”
“Oh, so you don’t think it will be effective in long run?”
“Err… no. When you hire a thief to catch another thief, a clear distinction between the controlled side and the controlling side disappears. It may not go well in long run.”

This is bad.
I have expressed disagreement with the duke. Damn it!

“So you believe that having knights take care of thieves is better? Actually, you may be right.”
“Hmm… so Gozer isn’t as inflexible as I thought.”
“But I believe it is effective in the short term.”

I follow up hurriedly.
I wonder if it was alright to express an opinion different from the Duke.
It will be purged.

“Did you call me?”

A voice comes in from outside.
We can wrap up this topic now.
God, is that you?

“Is that you, Cassia? Please come in.”
“Okay.”

A goddess indeed.
The door opens and Cassia walks in.
As beautiful as ever.
She is dressed in a light blue gothic outfit with slight exposure of skin.

She is brimming with grace, serene and elegance.
She looks like a noble lady from a painting.
Rather, she is the real thing.

A maid follows behind her.
The voice from earlier seemed to belong to this maid.
She is a beautiful elf as well.
However, the magnificent beauty of Cassia stands out the most.

“Michio Dono have the same opinion as Cassia. He believes that it is a bad idea to use thieves against other thieves since there needs to be a clear distinction between those hunting and those being hunted.”
“Oh, is that right?”

Cassia looks at me and smiles lightly.
The smile of a goddess.

“Because there is a possibility of collusion?”
“That’s right. It’s not appropriate for a noble’s part to be played by anyone other than a noble.”
“Even if it’s an emergency, you need to consider when to hire a thief to catch another thief.”

I can’t help but stare at Cassia.
Earlier, I was concerned about disagreeing with the Duke, but it seems to have gone well.
It wasn’t purged.

“Well, that is no longer necessary. Rejoice Cassia for Michio dono has punished Heinz’s gang.”
“Oh dear.”

Cassia opens her eyes wide, and looks at me with a joyous expression.
How much these blue eyes extend to.
I feel like I am being absorbed.
Actually, I would love to be absorbed into her.

“Only Simon managed to flee, but he can’t do much by himself. I wouldn’t be surprised if he has dropped dead already.”

That is indeed the case.

“Thank you very much. Heinz was active in the Earl of Selmar’s territory, my parents’ home. A few Acquaintances of mine were murdered by Heinz. Thankfully, Michio sama took revenge for me, too.”

Cassia bows.
Her beautiful, shiny golden hair cascade.

“No, not at all. I am grateful for your words.”
“I got worried when I heard they were in the Earl’s territory. The residents of Selmar will feel relieved with this, too.”
“I am honored to be of help.”

It is enough for people of Selmar just to have had Cassia worried.

“Was anyone in Heinz’s gang equipped with a ring?”

I am asked by the Duke.
I take out the Ring of Determination from my Item Box, and pass it to the Duke.

“By a ring, do you mean this ring?”
“Oh. No, it should be different from what I remember.”

Well, Ring of Determination was reborn by the Character Reset.
It can’t go back to how it was before.

“I only found this ring.”
“Don’t worry. I do not doubt Michio dono. Gozer, what do you think?”
“Well, I think there were more scratches. May be the ring was polished?”
“Heinz stole the Ring of Determination from the Earl of Selmar. It originally belonged to my house. When i married Cassia, I presented it as betrothal gift.”

The Duke explains the situation.
So originally, it was an accessory that belonged to the Duke?
And then the Ring of Determination was presented as betrothal gift?

“Betrothal gift…?”
“It’s contrary to the custom of commoners. In case of commoners, males fight against monsters. Therefore, the number of males decreases while the number of females increases. For this reason, at the time of marriage, females need to offer dowry. If the dowry is not enough, it could lead to polygamy. However, in case of nobles, since very few nobles fight against monsters, males are not any less than females. Therefore, the male has to present a betrothal gift at the time of marriage.”

The Duke, thinking probably that I didn’t understand, explains about nobles’ betrothal gift.
Well, I did not even know about the dowry of commoners, let alone nobles’ betrothal gift.
In case of commoners, the female seems to pay the male money and goods at time of marriage.

In the past, men used to get killed in wars. I heard stories about Islamic religion allowing polygamy for this reason.
Is this similar to that?

“I see.”
“If this is the Ring of Determination Heinz had, I’d like to buy it by all means. Are you fine with it?”
“Does it have a history?”
“It is something my ancestors from five generations back received during fixation.”

It really seems that the Ring of Determination came out during fixation.

“So it has such a history.”

It can not be helped.
I don't see any reason to refuse.

"Then I will receive the ring and have it appraised right away."
"Okay."

The Ring of Determination was taken from me just like that.
What about the price?
Will It be the same as having to follow the price set by lords?
Since it concerns the Duke and Cassia, I don't think the price will be low however.

It feels like receiving a blank cheque.
They will pay the price I write.
It will be a problem in itself.

"I want to take Michio dono to the Earl of Selmar. What do you think, Cassia?"

The Duke throws a frightening suggestion.
I am fine with just getting the compensation.

"Yes. There should be words of thanks from the Earl of Selmar, of course."

Cassia agrees with him.
Now I have no choice but to go.

"There should be. Are you okay with that, Michio dono? They just need to spare some time and bow their heads. It doesn't need to be formal. It will not go bad nor will it trouble you. I would like Michio dono to go in person."
"I see."
" The thieves were taken care of thanks to Michio Sama. I will appreciate if you give the Earl of Selmar the opportunity to express his gratitude as well."
"I understand."

Since Cassia is asking of me, I can't refuse.
I want to decline it if possible, but I can't find a reason to refuse.

"If I killed the thief which the Earl of Selmar couldn't get rid of, It would be something I could take pride in."

May be that is the true intention of the Duke.
I wonder if the relationship between the Duke and his in-laws is bad since he stole their beautiful daughter.
Can you please not involve me in your personal matters?

“I will arrange a day with the Earl of Selmar. It will not be immediate however. So Michio dono, can you come to Bode again in the morning three days from now? I will have the date decided by then.”
“Okay, three days. Then I will come here again in three days.”

I bow to Cassia and the Duke, and take my leave.
It is about time to end this conversation.

I don’t mind being forever near Cassia, but I can not say that.
There is also a possibility that I would be asked of more unreasonable demands.
Also, I should withdraw before I am asked to show my Intelligence Card.

“Michio dono, from here please.”

Gozar sees me off to the lobby.

“Gozer dono, is there perhaps a village or a port or may be a place where I can acquire a lot of fish from?”
“When you speak about fishing village, Hafen comes to my mind. It is famous for the quality of fish. If you wish to, I can ask one of our adventurers to take you there.”

As I thought, there seems to be a good fishing village in the territory of Harz duchy.
I conjectured that the Harz duchy is close to the sea when I heard that amber is mined there.
I guessed that the sea will be to the north.

“This is Hafen.”

The adventurer brings me to what seems to be the fishing market of the village.
The air is filled with smell of the sea and fish mingled together.
The sellers are displaying the fish and interacting with the buyers.

“You are not a member of the order of knights. How can I help?”

As soon as we arrive, an elf approaches us.
He appears to be from this fishing village.
Village Chief Lv3

“I want you to listen to this person’s request. With this, I am off.”

The adventure who brought me heads back immediately.

“So, how can I be of help?”
“Is it possible to buy fish from here?”
“Yes. There is no particular restriction.”

Since the adventurer went home, I speak directly with the chief.
This looks fine to me.
That’s all I needed to hear.

“Is it always busy like this?”
“Every morning, we drop the net in different location. The quality and quantity of the fish caught is purely based on luck. The fish we catch are sold here. Today, It was quite a catch.”
“Okay. From now on, I will be coming here to buy fish.”
“We will be waiting for you.”

I make a new acquaintance and go back home.

After returning, I confirm the prize money.
39 gold coins and 52 silver coins.
395,200 Nars.
Although the Duke said it’s less, is it really less?

Among the eight Intelligence Cards I had, six thieves had low levels.
About ten to twenty each.
Those six probably value around 100,000 Nars.

There was one high level thief. The bounty for that one should most likely be 100,000 Nars.
And Heinz the bandit’s bounty will be about 200,000 Nars.

It does seem less after all.
But can I say that now?
It is late now to say that.
Even if I complain, there is no reason for them to increase it.

“Now that I have turned in the Intelligence Cards, I can go back to Haruba’s labyrinth.”

I tell the three at breakfast.
Also, since the thieves were killed, I don’t think their companions will return to any labyrinth in the territory of Harz duchy.
I can insist that Simon’s whereabouts remain unknown if it comes to that.
But I don’t think they will stick to this matter.

“The monster on 13th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth is Pig Hog.”
“The weakness of Pig Hog is water magic, right?”
“That’s right.”

I confirm with Sherry.
The monster on 12th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth was Grass Bee whose weakness was wind magic, while the weakness of Pig hog, the monster native to 13th floor, is water magic.
It would be more efficient to go to 16th Floor of Quratar’s labyrinth, but I can’t help it.
I can’t afford to act out of convenience now.

Well, there is also the possibility of using guide to reach 16th floor of Haruba’s and Tare’s labyrinths, but it will be meaningless if the monster lineup is different.
It is safer to explore the floors in order then.
I should get the Adventurer job as early as I can, but I can not level Explorer job to Lv50 in two days.

“With the money in respect of bounty, we should consider increasing party members.”
“Yes, certainly.”
“I don’t mean right now. We will wait until Miria gets familiar.”
“××××××××××”
“Yes.”

I reiterate my intention to expand my harem.
But I will wait until Miria doesn't need Roxanne for interpretation.
And it will take time until she masters Barhim language to the level of being able to make conversations.

"Also, I sold the Ring of Determination to the Duke of Harz. Apparently, it was obtained by the Duke's ancestor during fixation. I am sorry, Miria."
"So it was like I thought."
"Yes."

Sherry and Miria nod.
After all, when Sherry equipped the Sacrificial Misanga, Miria received the Ring of Determination.
However, It ended up being for just one day.

Miria doesn't show any sign of disappointment at all.
But it was supposed to be her equipment. Is she really okay with it?

"As compensation, the knight leader introduced me to a fishing village in the Harz duchy. How about we go there the day after tomorrow?"

I follow up with a suggestion.

"Wow. Yes."

Miria's eyes shine when Roxanne translates.
As expected, she cares more about fish than equipment.

Chapter 97 - North Sea

“The territory of Harz duchy is to the north. There is bound to be lot of seafood in the fishing village.”
“Is that right?”

For some reason, Sherry cuts in the middle when I was speaking.
This is bad.
I heard that the North Sea on earth is full of fish.

Though it may not be the same for this world.
I can’t say, however, that the South Sea doesn’t have a bountiful of fish.

“Yes. There is supposed to be plenty of fish in the north.”
“I think there are more animals and plants existing in south because the wind there is warmer than in the north.”
“But that applies only to land.”
“Miria heard that more fish can be caught in the north, but she doesn’t know the reason.”

If Miria says so, then it most likely is the case.
That’s a relief.
The conditions here seem to be similar to earth.

“Why are there more fish in the north? It is a mystery to me.”
“Mystery, desu.”

Sherry and Miria are getting along pretty well.
It is strange.
I am puzzled because these two are on opposite sides of Roxanne.

“There is only water in the sea. Therefore, basic nutrition isn’t enough.”
“Is that true?”
“That’s right. So, where does nutrition in the sea come from? When a fish dies, it sinks to the bottom of the sea. The small insects disassemble the sunk fish. Then big bugs eat small insects, which in turn are eaten by small fish. Big fish eats small fish, and when big fish dies, it again sinks to the bottom of the sea. The nutrition in the sea circulates like this. Therefore, the nutrition exists at the bottom of the sea. While the bottom is rich in nutrition, there is little nutrition in other parts. The number of fish in the

sea will not increase without enough nutrition. This is the basic cycle of the sea."

I teach them what I learned in biology class.
I don't think they will understand bacteria, organic matter or food chain even if I explain.

"××××××××××"
"Water is cold at the bottom of the sea. In the South Sea, the surface heats up during the day, so the temperature of water increases. Therefore, it's difficult for the warm water at the surface and the cold water at the bottom to mix well, so the nutrition at the bottom does not spread around the sea. On the other hand, in the North Sea, the water both at the bottom and at the surface is cold, so it gets mixed well. Therefore, the nutrition at the bottom tends to spread around the sea. This is the reason why the North Sea has plenty more fish than the South Sea."

I wait for Roxanne to translate what I explained.

"As expected of Master. Miria says it is her first time hearing this."
"Hmm… I smell a lie."
"Amazing, desu."

Sherry and Miria show opposite reaction.
While Miria is honest, Sherry is critical.
Miria's response is probably due to Roxanne's education.
But Sherry doesn't seem to trust me at all.

"What do you mean by 'I smell a lie'?"
"Hmm"
"But it really is true."
"You aren't trying to deceive me?"
"I am really not trying to deceive you."

Why would I?
I don't think I ever lied to them.
"You found something wrong in what I said?"
"…"

Here we go again.

“The surface of the South Sea is warm while surface of the North Sea is cold. Up to this point, I understand. But wouldn’t that make the bottom of the North Sea colder than the South Sea? But the temperature does not change according to you.”
“That’s a good question. If the water becomes too cold, it will freeze and the ice will float to the surface.”
“Ice will float to the surface?”

Huh? Does sherry not know about ice?
Oh, apparently this world does not have a refrigerator or freezer.

“Ice will float on the surface of water. Have you not heard stories of how the surface of a lake freezes in winter?”
“I have heard that.”
“It is the same thing. When it becomes excessively cold even in the North Sea, the surface gets covered in ice, so the water at the bottom doesn’t become cold anymore. For this reason, the water temperature at the bottom does not greatly differ between the two seas. Only the surface temperature differs.”
“Hmm… I see. I feel some of what you just said sounds logical.”

Oh
I have finally managed to convince Sherry.
Victory for science.
Although this step is small, It is a great step forward for mankind.

After finally convincing Sherry, we head to 13th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth.
I needed five Water Storms to kill two Pig Hogs and two additional Breeze Balls for Grass Bee.
A total of seven spells.

“So it is as I expected.”

Seven spells huh?
It is not that different from 16th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth.
Battle duration is almost the same as well.
I think we can clear all the way till there.

“It will be fine. We can already fight on 16th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth, so It will not be that difficult here.”

In Roxanne's opinion, it'll be safe here.
"However, the efficiency is bad."
"Even if battles are long, we haven't suffered any damage."
The battle duration for 13th floor here is same as 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

"Well, there is no helping it."
"There is the request of the Duke as well."
There is no problem in exploring 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth but exploring 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth will help me in becoming adventurer quickly.

Later that day. After exploring 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, I get some chores done.
First, I receive the maid clothes for Miria from the clothing store in the Imperial capital.
Has it already been 10 days since Miria arrived?
It will be better to get more familiar with her before increasing harem members.

Evening. I return home with Miria's maid clothes.
Roxanne and Sherry bring their own maid clothes as well to the living room.

"Then I will teach Miria how to dress up."

Roxanne says and starts to take off her clothes.
When Roxanne takes off her clothes, her big and soft breasts make their appearance.
I can't get used to them no matter how many times I see them.
They are the best no matter how many times I look at them.

A big and fascinating chest is hidden in graceful, blue housemaid clothes.
Swaying, shaking, squeezing, but remaining hidden.

That's outrageous.
Outrageous indeed.
They are held beneath the maid clothes, so they won't move.
This suppleness is wonderful as ever.

As for Miria's maid clothes, it is similar to Roxanne's and Sherry's maid clothes except for the apron.
Small cat ears on top of maid clothes look great.

"But why are you changing here?"

If you changed in the bedroom, I would have been able to push you down on the bed.
Or perhaps you didn't want me to do that?

"Well, we change here and then master will carry us to the bed."

So it was like that.
Of course I will carry you.

I pick Roxanne up as I put one arm on her back and the other one under her knees.
I hold her smooth body on my arms while I slowly and gently carry her to the bed.
I stare at her breasts jiggle like a baby.

I can feel her softness and suppleness in my arms.
Everything about her feels great.

Sherry's petite body is lighter.
I place my arm above her delicate feet, and hold her tightly to my body.
I carry her small body easily.

Lastly, it is time to carry Miria.
As I hold her, her ears start twitching.
Miria became quiet as I gently carry her in my arms.

Now that I have carried them to the bed, it's time to eat them.
Of course I will eat them up.
When I was eating the three of them, I forgot to prepare the meal.
It was delicious.

Next morning. We go to the fish market in Hafen.
There is a strong scent of fish and the sea.

“Ooooh!”
I watch as Miria tries to say something.
She wants to say something.
I get what she wants to says.

“When would you like to eat it? At breakfast or at dinner?”
“I would like it for dinner. Although I’ll have to wait, it’ll taste more delicious later.”

Roxanne translates her answer.
She seems fixated over other things at the moment.

“Then choose your favorite.”
“Yes, desu.”

We follow around the market after Miria.
There was a good variety of fish on the market.
Although few, lobsters and crabs are being sold as well.
Before long, Miria starts a deep conversation with an old lady in a shop.

“Are they able to communicate?”
“I don’t know. The Bana language she is using is a little different, but understanding each other is possible if they speak slowly.”

Both Roxanne and Miria speak the same Bana language.
But it is not so in case of this old lady and our catgirl.
The language that Miria speaks and the language that the old lady speaks differ as much as Spanish differs from Portuguese.

“This, desu.”

Miria looks back at me while pointing to a fish.
The small fish looks like Mackerel.
Has she decided on Mackerel?

“Eight of this one, desu.”
“But there is nothing to put it in.”

I don’t have a shopping basket.
Bread is held in hands and vegetables are normally carried in the backpack

at the time of returning home.
I want to avoid fish odor coming from the backpack.
Miria may like it though.

“××××××××××”
“××××××××××”
“She is saying we can have a bucket for 20 Nars.”

Roxanne negotiates with the old lady in the shop.

“Then a bucket and 8 of that fish.”

When Roxanne translates and places the order, the old lady leaves the shop and goes somewhere.
Probably to bring the bucket.

“××××××××××”

While pointing at the fish, Miria explains more about it.

“Internal organs of this fish need to be cleaned carefully, so that it doesn’t bleed.”
“I see.”

So you need to carefully handle it huh?
Or the taste will change.
Although modern-world fishing is vastly different from here, there are some similarities.
As expected of Miria.

The old lady is back with a bucket.
It’s a flat tub with handles, like the one used for delivery from sushi bar.
Miria puts eight fish in the bucket.

“That’s 28 Nars.”

Roxanne translates the price.
That’s cheap.
1 Nar for each fish?
30% discount doesn’t seem to be effective in the old lady’s case.

“Is this all?”
“Yes, desu.”

Since Miria nods, We go back home.

“They are small. Is this really okay?”
“It seems the fish were caught in seine. The fisherman who caught the fish said she can also catch fish smaller than her palm. The small fish are cheap, but if prepared carefully, they can be very delicious.”
“I see. As expected of Miria.”
“Yes, desu.”

Miria sticks her chest out proudly.
I pat her head.

We keep the fish in the kitchen until evening.
In the evening, Miria cuts it down into three pieces and sautes it.
It has crunchy texture but it’s chewy to eat.
It’s delicious.

“It is delicious.”
“Yes, desu.”

Miria finishes eating her fill quickly, and starts staring at the dish when I distribute it to others.
When the dish moves to left, Miria’s eyes follow it to the left.
When it returns to right, Miria’s eyes return to the right.

“…I don’t think I can eat any more fish.”
“I think I have eaten enough as well.”
“Me too.”

I knew it would come down to this.

“You can eat the remaining fish, Miria.”
“Yes, desu!”

We were forced to concede today again.

Next morning. It is the day I agreed with Cassia.
I assume the worst situation and warp to Bode's adventurers guild, and then walk to the castle.
I doubt it will be pleasant introducing a person of unknown origin to the Earl.
They may even ask to check my Intelligence Card as well.

Still, I can't think of an appropriate way to decline a request from the Duke and Cassia.

It was my grandfather's will.
→ What exactly was his will?

It is a formal occasion.
→ Am I not always granted audience with the Duke?

Because my party member died in the fight with the thieves, I can't be the only one to receive honor.
→ Didn't I say that others are safe?

I have suffered critical injury after shameful defeat to a monster in the labyrinth.
→ It can be healed using recovery pills.

I have to go back to my hometown because my parents died.
→ It will be a problem if they find me in Quratar.

Sudden illness.
→ It will buy me a few more days at best.

No. I have really been feeling pain in my stomach for a while now.

Well, I can always runaway without saying anything, but I may not be able to continue being adventurer if I am declared as fugitive.
Well, there is nothing serious at present to run away under the cover.
There's no helping it since I have already come this far.
I can quit later if it needs be.

I sort my thoughts as I enter the castle.
Both Cassia and the Duke were waiting in the lobby.

Cassia is wearing elegant light purple dress, with hair accessory resembling tiara.
She really is beautiful.
The Duke is wearing flashier clothes than usual.
Both are dressed up.

“Oh, if it isn’t Michio dono. We have been waiting for you. But why did you come from outside?”
“Err… no, I was just-”
“Well, it doesn’t matter now. Are you coming with us?”

How can you say it doesn’t matter?
So there is no longer a need to hear anything from me?

“Where?”
“We are headed to the Earl of Selmar’s place.”
“Right now?”
“That’s what we talked about three days ago.”

Didn’t you say you would inform me of the arranged date in three days?

“I am sorry, Michio Sama. I tried to arrange for a time that would work with the busy schedule of his highness. Today was the best time to visit the Earl of Selmar’s place.”

Cassia bows.
A faint fragrance drifts to me as her beautiful hair waves.
Did Cassia wear a perfume because she is visiting the Earl of Selmar?
It’s a sweet fragrance.

Cassia’s dress is elegant and pretty.
Gorgeous dress and hair ornamented with jewels make Cassia even more beautiful.
If I am going with Cassia, I don’t care about anything else.

“It doesn’t matter; it will be settled quickly. If Michio dono likes the place, he can visit again any time.”
“I’ll be in your care then.”
“Very well.”

I bow to Cassia in return.
I'll just ignore the Duke. I'll ignore him.
The Duke is unusually impatient today.
I should have expected it would come to this.

Chapter 98 - Bluff

“Well then, ready to go?”
“What about my clothes?”
“I don’t mind if you stay as you are.”
“And the sword?”
“There will be no problem if you put it in your Item Box.”

I try to find various excuses, but he rejects all of them.
I joined the party of an adventurer of the order of knights, and was taken to the Earl of Selmar’s residence.
Via [Field Walk], we arrive at a place that looks like a lobby.
Doesn’t it have the same construction as Bode’s castle?

“Six people, including the Duke of Harz, have arrived.”

The knight from our party announces to a knight from the other side.

“I have been waiting for you. Please allow me to be your guide.”

The knight from the other side responds respectfully.
It seems there was already an arrangement.
It would be troublesome otherwise.
It’s great that the one who set up this meeting was Cassia, not the Duke.

“I will be in your care.”
“The five people, except the adventurer, please follow me. As for the adventure, please wait here.”

The guide knight heads inside.
But I am supposed to be an adventurer as well.

“Let’s go then.”

The Duke nods at me, and goes inside.
Do I take that nod as ‘there’s no problem?’

Cassia follows after him.
I follow them inside since I can not afford to fall behind.

After walking for a while, and then going up stairs, we finally arrive in front of a big door.

“The Earl is waiting inside.”
“Mhm, you two wait here.”

The duke entrusts one of the knights in our party with the Orichalcum sword.
Only the three of us go inside: the Duke, Cassia and myself.
It seems even the Duke is not allowed to carry a weapon beyond this point.
I have already put my weapon inside my Item Box, and it seems Cassia didn’t bring any weapon with her.

The knight guiding us opens the door.
It isn’t a large room.
It is a small, throne room.
A plump elf is seated on a chair in the center.

So he is the Earl of Selmar.
40-year-old Lv21 Knight.
Considering his age, his level is not high.

An elf can be plump?
Eventhough he’s plump, he’s good looking, which pisses me off.

A huge curtain is hanging behind the chair.
I have seen the pattern on the left before.
It is the emblem of the Harz duchy.
The Duke walks arrogantly toward that emblem.

“Come inside, Michio dono.”

Cassia calls me.
I thought the order would be the Duke > Cassia > me, but it seems to be the Duke > me > Cassia.
I bow, and follow after the Duke.

I was instructed to bow my head.
This should be fine.
The Duke doesn’t bow. I didn’t expect him to bow anyway.

Cassia follows from behind me and lines up next to the Duke.
I could smell her perfume when she passed by my side.
That's a relief. I have been hidden by the two people standing in front of me.

"Your excellency, I am glad you came. It's been a long time, Cassia."
"Yes. I am glad uncle is in good health above everything."

Cassia replies to the Earl of Selmar.
Earlier, Cassia said it was her home, but it was apparently her uncle's.
Let's continue with the conversation without touching any sentimental topic.

"And that person is?"
"This person is Michio dono. He splendidly defeated Heinz the bandit."

The topic moves to me before long.

"Oh, how fortunate."
"This person defeated Heinz without any trouble. Michio dono is also assisting us with clearing the labyrinths in our territory."
"I am envious as our territory only has the order of knights."

I am getting a chill down my spine from the Duke's and the Earl of Selmar's conversation.
This conversation seems strangely hostile.

I am really lucky.
That he's on my side.
I didn't think I would need support here.
Is this an appropriate place for such a conversation?

Is it alright for the heads of their terrtories to behave like this?
This is not right. It sounds more like kids' quarral than a meeting.
I could even say they are oblate (children) wrapped up as adults.
I am not sure if their mental age is as high as their physical age.

"Of course I noticed that. Your knights were useless in capturing Heinz or even clearing the labyrinths."
"Your knights couldn't defeat Heinz as well."

“Does the Earl of Selmar wish for Michio dono’s assistance?”
“It is questionable relying on your knights if they must rely on others.”

It’s reaching new lows with every passing moment.

“Come to think of it, the gang of Heinz were equipped with a ring. Isn’t that right, Michio dono?”
“Oh, yes.”

I answer the Duke while bowing.

“It came as Ring of Determination with Armor Appraisal. Do you have any idea, Earl of Selmar?”
“N-No. I don’t.”
“I thought so. I will be keeping the ring then. If you say you need it, I am willing to sell it.”

I heard that Heinz stole the Ring of Determination from the Earl of Selmar, but it was apparently not made public.
What would happen if this secret is out?
Well, if it’s made public that a thief stole from the Earl, he would look foolish.

If an item, which was presented as a betrothal gift, gets stolen from you and the person, who presented the gift, recovers it, wouldn’t you lose face?
Did the Duke bring me along for this?
He wanted my testimony that Heinz had the Ring of Determination?

“By the way, I heard that Heinz the bandit was defeated by an adventurer. Such a thing is impossible.”

Suddenly, the direction of the conversation changes.

“Him, may be?”
“May be not. There was probably some mistake.”
“O-Of course not!”

The Duke panics.
Is the adventurer job really that useless?
The adventurer of the order of knights was also asked to stay at the lobby.

Adventurers can move anywhere using [Field Walk].
I guess it is to prevent them from wandering around the castle.
Did the Duke know and just ignored it?

“If you brought an adventurer to the throne room inside the castle, there would be suspicion of ill-intention toward the territory of Selmar.”
“It would be.”
“It is easy to check the Intelligence Card, but to doubt the person that Duke brought alongside him.”

The Earl of Selmar is trying to set him up.
I wonder from where did he hear that I was an adventurer.
The Earl of Selmar is Cassia’s relative.
There is a possibility that it was the maid attending to Cassia.

“So then.”
“Apart from that, how can I show my sincerity?”

Prostrate on the ground somewhere if you really feel any sincerity inside you.
Sincerity is that tough to show.

“No way, you will not.”
“Of course I don’t doubt you, but there still remains a little doubt.”
“Then.”
“The question still remains unanswered.”

Most likely, the Earl of Selmar is confident that I am an adventurer because of the Duke’s attitude.
Does he intended to press this on for some sort of concession?
The Duke made me testify that Heinz had the ring. The Earl of Selmar pointed out that I was an adventure and I shouldn’t have been brought along.
Are both of them going to pull out as a draw?

“Uncle!?”
“There is no doubt, of course, toward neither the Duke nor Cassia.”

The Earl of Selmar rejects Cassia’s objection.
The fight between the Duke of Harz and the Earl of Selmar doesn’t matter.
The result of their fight doesn’t matter.

But it is unacceptable if it is going to trouble Cassia or make her suffer.
I raise my head.

“Okay, I understand. I’ll have my Intelligence Card checked if it will help clear your doubts.”

The knight at the back approaches me.

“But I can’t allow you to insult Michio dono.”
“I don’t mind.”
“Not only Michio dono, but to insult Cassia whom I have brought along.”

The Duke is enraged.
It is not possible for the Duke to know that I am not an adventurer.
It is my first time seeing this attitude of his.

In other words, the Duke’s speech was a bluff.
I won’t be troubled by having my Intelligence Card checked but the Earl of Selmar will be. He has already taken the bait, all that’s left is raising the latch.
Let’s make the Earl of Selmar drop out from the game.

Like the Duke, I guess he is also political personality. After hearing me agreeing to it, he immediately proceeds with it.
It seems he is accustomed to political bargaining.

“No, there’s no need to go that far. The Duke and Cassia need to bow and apologize.”
“I will not allow the Duke and Cassia sama to bow for my sake. Please go ahead and check.”

As for me, however, I’m not bluffing.
I extend my left arm to the knight in front of me.

Cassia anxiously stares at me.
The Duke watches me in silence while maintaining a poker face.

“…Do it.”

Did he see through their bluff from the change in their expressions? Did he lose the chance to pull back? Anyways, the Earl gives the order to proceed.
The Duke leaves it to heaven.
The knight reads my Intelligence Card.

“Michio Kaga Sama. His job is Explorer.”

The knight announces.
Of course, there is no way it will show as adventurer.
Because I am not an adventurer.
The Duke and Cassia have surprised look. The Earl of Selmar has frozen.

“I will inquire you further regarding this matter some other day. For today, allow me to excuse myself.”

The Duke turns and goes toward the exit in large strides.
Cassia chases after him as well.
The knight, who read my card, hurriedly runs to open the door.
The two knights, who were waiting outside, rush immediately to escort the Duke.

“The sword.”

The knight holds out the Orichalcum sword.
The Duke receives the sword, and continues onward in a hurry.
I follow after him, too.
The duke doesn’t say any word until we return to Bode from the lobby.

“I am sorry, Michio dono. The protective cement is used for the Earl of Selmar’s castle but there is an old-fashioned tradition that does not allow adventurers inside. I did not think he will bring that up.”

After arriving, the Duke complains.

“The story of Michio sama being an adventurer, he most likely heard it from one of the maids that I brought with me from my home. I should have forbidden her from mentioning it.”
“It is a little late now. I was careless as well.”
“I didn’t think the Earl of Selmar will come up with this kind of harassment.”

Cassia shares the same opinion.
But I don't understand what was that sudden accusation toward the Duke and Cassia about.

"Still, I was surprised that Michio dono changed his job to explorer. When your Intelligence Card was being checked, I broke into cold sweat."
"I thought something like that might happen."
"It is not impossible to change job from Adventure to Explorer. And it seems some places still have the old custom of not allowing adventurers inside an aristocrat's home. But to have foreseen it, well done. As expected of Michio dono. Perhaps that was the reason why you didn't come into the castle through the wall of the lobby?"

The Duke is making his own assumptions and drawing his own conclusions.
I am really glad that I thought of the worst case and came into the castle from outside.

"It turned out fine by chance."
"Well done. By the way, how will you go back home? If necessary, I can send someone with you."
"My friends are waiting outside."

I properly decline.
Normally, in order to change back, I must change job at some adventurers guild.
I still don't know if I can visit any guild, or If i need to visit specific guild to change my job, but I shouldn't let him know about that.

"As for the ring that I kept the other day, it was undoubtedly the Ring of Determination. I will pay twenty gold coins for it. Is that okay?"
"I am grateful."

"Twenty gold coins?"
It is more expensive that I thought.
No matter how generous he is, If I think about the prices of the other accessories, the market price for this ring should be about 100,000 Nars.
Which means, it's double the price.

As it was arranged already, another knight brings a drawstring bag (pouch) immediately.
The Duke hands it to me.

“Then Michio sama, thank you for your time today.”

When I receive the drawstring bag (pouch), Cassia expresses her gratitude as she heads inside.
I am glad that I get to smell her sweet fragrance until the end.

“Then I will take my leave.”
“Mhm, thank you for your help today. I hope to see you soon.”

There is no reason to stay here since Cassia has left.
I walk until I was out of the Bode castle.
In order to make sure that I was not being followed, I walk till Bode’s labyrinth.

“How far has the exploration progressed?”
“10th floor.”

I talk with the explorer at the entrance, and then head inside.
if I was being followed, they would not know which floor I went to once I entered into the labyrinth.
I only go to 1st floor though.
From the small room on 1st floor, I immediately go back home.

“Sorry, did I make you wait?”
“No, it is alright.”

The preparations for breakfast were already done when I arrived at home.
I was planning on coming back after hearing the appointed day.
I didn’t think I will be taken there immediately.

These kind of things happen.
The duke likes to play tricks.

I sit down on a chair and breathe heavily.
I am tired today.
Even though it is still morning.
It feels like I have lost a few years of my life.

But I am not that tired to take a rest yet, so I enter the labyrinth.
By the end of hunting for the day, my jobs increase by two.
Once Warrior hits Lv30.

Bounty Hunter Lv1
Effects: Small Increase in Dexterity | Slight Increase in Strength | Slight Increase in MP
Skill: Ignore Life and Death

Knight Lv1
Effects: Small Increase in Endurance | Slight Increase in Intelligence | Slight Increase in Spirit
Skills: Defense | Appointment | Intelligence Card Operation

Bounty Hunter and Knight.
Both jobs acquired from leveling up Warrior job?

Had I got the job earlier, I could have set the Knight as first job when they checked my card earlier at the Earl of Selmar's place.
The Duke would have certainly been surprised.

Well, I don't think I should put myself in danger for only a petty prank.

The condition to acquire Adventurer is to have Explorer Lv50.
All the adventurers already possess Explorer job.
Because the person he believed to be an adventurer turned out to be an explorer, the Duke didn't object.
If I was knight instead of adventurer, even he would be suspicious.

Chapter 99 - Regional Activities

“Do you know about [Ignore Life and Death] skill of Bounty Hunter?”

I ask Sherry.

“I read this skill is used to give death blow to monsters and bandits.”
“I see.”

Nope, that’s what I thought too.
There is no doubt that Ignore Life and Death skill is a single target attack skill.
When I invoked the skill, it prompted me to select a target.
However, I was only prompted to select a target. There was no option to trigger it.

Or perhaps the skill only did slight damage?
I attacked Grass Bees many times before taking them out in 8 spells. So if it did any damage, it was insignificant.
There is a possibility that it relies on weapon. If that’s the case, the one I have is useless.
I can’t expect much of the rod in terms of attack power.

By the way, when I switched Monk with Bounty Hunter, I needed 8 spells to take monsters out, even though they were weak against that magic.
Five Water Storms to kill Pig Hogs, with another three Breeze Balls to take out Grass Bee.
To make sure, I fight another group of four monsters. Five Breeze Storms were needed to kill two Grass Bees, with two more Water Storms to take out two Pig Hogs.
(Since Grass Bees have poison, it is better to defeat them first if they are same or more in numbers.)

The only thing I changed was exchanging Monk with Bounty Hunter.
Monk is set as forth job, but the effect seems to be the same.
When it leveled up to 10 then 20 and 30, I didn’t notice it, but when it levels up, the effect seems to increase indeed.

Well, it was reduced from Monk Lv40 to Bounty Hunter Lv1.
A little drop in status is unavoidable.

I increase jobs to Six, and open job settings to add Monk and Knight.
Monsters were defeated in seven spells since Monk is back.

Monk was effective even as sixth job.
As an experiment, I switch Bounty Hunter and Knight jobs with high level Alchemist and Merchant jobs to test 'Increase in Intelligence' effect, but there was no change.
I knew such an unreasonably large effect would not exist.

I added two jobs with same effect, but the status doesn't seem to have increased by the same degree.
If it were the case, it would be great to add seventh job.
So the bonus is small then?

I am starting to think [Ignore Life and Death] may be a recovery skill, not offensive skill, as it took eight spells to defeat the first monster.
Regardless of the target's health, it remained alive after using the skill.
The result remained the same with or without using the skill.
However, the skill belongs to Bounty Hunter which is not a healing job.

"It can kill the monsters on first few levels with a single blow. I also heard the more experience you get, the stronger and easy to trigger it gets."

Sherry further explains.
It will really be the strongest skill if it can deliver 100% guaranteed death blow without any risk of backfire.
Does it mean the trigger chance is affected by a parameter such as level?

So it might activate against level 1 monsters.
It will probably not activate here since it is only Lv1.
Although it hasn't used MP yet, it doesn't mean it's a no-cost skill.
It would not be categorized as skill if only strength was needed to use it.

I take a look at the skills of Knight job next.

There is no prompt to select target in case of [Defense].
But there are no other options either. It seems to be a fully defensive skill from the name.
May be it increases defensive power?
I use it with Durandal, but I still don't notice anything.

[Intelligence Card Operation] seems to work normally.
I am interested in what kind of operation is possible, but it is not a good idea to do it right now.

What does [Appointment] do?
It asks me to select a target as well.
It doesn't look like an offensive skill, as it tries to select Roxanne.

Whoops
When I use [Appraisal], her job was Village Chief Lv1 instead of Beast Warrior Lv32.
The skill is to appoint head of village.

I try to appoint Sherry and Miria as well.
Only Miria gets appointed as Village Chief Lv1.
I can't appoint myself though.
It seems I can't specify myself as target.

Perhaps I couldn't appoint sherry because she was carrying a recovery medicine in her Item Box?
Earlier, I couldn't change Explorer job when I had some items in my Item Box.
May be the reason it couldn't change from Master Smith is similar since she has something inside her Item Box?

Since [Appointment] assigns Village Chief as first job, Master Smith needs to be removed first.
I take a look at Party Job Settings, but it seems she doesn't have Village Chief job yet.

"Sherry, do you know about Knight's [Defense] skill?
"It is a skill to increase defense for a while. It is usually used in boss battle."
"I see. So it's good for boss battles huh?"
"That's right."

Like I thought, it is a skill that increases defense.
Well, I can shut out almost all the boss fights, but it will be a useful skill in the future.

"It is a really useful skill. In the future, a knight will probably be necessary. Would anyone of you like to become a knight?"

“If I will be of use to Master, I would like to do it.”
“It will require a long period of training as warrior to become a knight.”

Roxanne immediately raises her hand. Sherry shows her concern.
Is there even such a problem?
Miria’s Diver is Lv30 already. In fact, it didn’t take much work.

“It is alright. It will work out somehow.”
“Will I use medicine?”
“Can you become a knight using medicine?”
“There is a medicine called ‘Dope Medicine.’ It’s believed that if you use it, you can become a little stronger. If taken in large quantity, it is possible to acquire superior job. But it’s said that the person who uses this method is weaker than the one who spent years in training and gaining experience.”

Is there such an item?
If change of job is possible, it must be a level up item.

There is a drawback, though.
It would only increase level, but parameters would most probably remain same.
It’s better if I don’t use it.

“I see. But we are not going to use the medicine.”
“We are not?”
“If she is willing to help, Miria is suitable for it.”

I can’t say that to Roxanne.

“But I would like to hear Roxanne’s opinion first.”

Actually, I’m enough as a knight.
But it would be nice if someone becomes a knight, and appoints me as Village Chief.
Then I will go to the Duke and tell him that I have become head of a village.

I really don’t think that Roxanne will need [Defense], but It will not be bad to have.
When fighting against stronger monsters, it is possible for some of them to have attacks that even Roxanne can’t dodge.

If you are specialized in dodging, it will hurt when enemy attacks hit you.
At that time, it will be reassuring to have [Defense] as an option.

"Yes."
"If only one person changed job, we won't need to change the current hunting floor. Because multiple members can't acquire Knight job, it is a good idea for Roxanne to become one."

Miria's job changes back to Diver Lv30. Roxanne becomes Warrior Lv1.
We will try 13th floor according to Sherry's advice.
There should be 'Increase in Strength' and 'Increase in HP' effects from Hero job, and the effects should stack with the effects from Miria's Diver job as well.
Even without retreating to lower floor, she will not be killed in one blow.

…Forget about getting killed in one blow, the monster attacks can't even graze her.
Roxanne is not getting hit by monster attacks.
No sign of getting hit.

And she's only a Warrior Lv1.
In other words, it wasn't due to her parameters but her ability.

Rather, after losing 'Increase in Agility' effect from Beast Warrior job, it took more strikes of Durandal.
May be it is just my imagination.

"Miria."
"Yes, desu."

During battle, Roxanne issues orders.
Upon hearing her name, Miria returns to the back in a hurry.

She seems concerned about Miria's tendency to act alone.
There are times when she steps forward too much.
Are the people of catkin tribe not good at fighting as part of group?

"She didn't show such behavior at first, but nowadays she occasionally starts heading to the front alone."

This shows how much she has got used to fighting.
Her level is hardly different from Sherry's.

If Roxanne is in front, the Grass Bee's long range attack will be focused on Roxanne.
For Sherry's spear to cancel the opponent's skill, we need to keep proper formation.

Even so, hearing just one word from Warrior Lv1 Roxanne, she obeys.
She replied politely as well.
Even though I said there is no need to use 'desu' inside labyrinth.

In the evening, after leaving Roxanne exposed to attacks, we finish hunting.
I go to Quratar to buy ingredients for dinner.
While shopping, I was called by the old lady from the hardware store.
She is the person who introduced me to the landlord.

"Great. I was about to go to your house."

"Due to the heavy rain from the other day, a part of the drainage broke."
"Heavy rain…"

I haven't heard about it.
Does it rain here heavily?
Because I warp to labyrinth and stay there, the weather outside doesn't really matter.
Since it is raining these days, is it already that time of year?

"Permission has been granted by the town lord; we will start doing the repairs the day after tomorrow. We will work from past noon until evening. At that time, please do not throw anything into the sewage. Dredging and planting of licorice will also be done. Also, if possible, can you please send one person? We need one from each house."

Regional activities huh?
It is something like a neighborhood association.
That's bothersome.

"I cannot avoid responsibility."

I reply appropriately, and then ask the three at dinner.

“It is alright. I will go.”
“It will be bad if no one participates. I will go.”

Roxanne and Sherry reply.
As expected, there’s no option to skip.

“No, I will be going. It doesn’t really matter.”
“Please Master, don’t participate.”

Roxanne stops me.

“Will it be bad if I participate?”
“You are not concerned about your face, but it is drainage cleaning nonetheless. They will look down on Master.”
“I see.”

I don’t get it. Is it because it is sewage?
It is a dirty place indeed.
Is it a kind of work that free people don’t do?

「××××××××××」
“Miria says she would participate at any cost.”
“I am in, desu.”

I wonder why.
I think she is getting the wrong idea.

“We are not going to fish.”

It’s not impossible.
If the fish is able to swim upriver, there is a possibility.
Even if it’s possible, I don’t want her to do it.

“Yes, desu.”
“Even if there is, don’t eat it.”
“Yes, desu.”

Her eyes are swimming already.

“Instead of ordering her not to eat, it will probably be better to buy her one to eat.”
“I think it will be troublesome if we don’t have fish for dinner.”

Roxanne and Sherry seem to have same concern.

“I will go, desu”

Miria keeps insisting on going.

“Miria is going to participate then, will it be fine?”
“There should be other beastkin among the participants, so it will be alright.”
“There may be someone I know.”
“The servant of the hardware seller is a beastkin. She will most probably be participating. I will ask her to take care of Miria.”

When did Roxanne have time to interact with neighbors?
If she says it will be fine, it will be, I guess.

“And the work should not be that difficult, so it will be okay.”
“It will be okay. We will have fish for dinner.”

Sherry says to console me.
I feel anxious about letting Miria go.
She obviously has different motive.
I will feel relieved if her motive is not the fish in the river the drainage is connected to.

Two days later. Since it has been decided that Miria will be participating, we go to the fish market in Hafen in the morning.
I intend to convey to her that she can eat fish without having to catch one.
I also brought the bucket.

“There will be fish for tonight’s dinner. Can you find small fish like the other day?”
“Yes, desu.”

Miria looks around the fish market with serious expression.
Before long, we were in front of the same place as before.

In the end, she went to the old catwoman's shop.
Perhaps they have reliable method of processing fish.

"8 fish, right?"
"Yes, desu."

It is the same mackerel fish as last time.
Miria places the order, and puts the selected fish in the bucket.

This shop has shrimps as well.
It looks like ordinary shrimps.
Can I cook them same as kuruma shrimps?

"Is it possible to bake shrimps?"
"Yes."
"Will it stay fresh till dinner?"

I ask Roxanne.
Roxanne translates what I said to the old catkin lady.
The old lady pokes a shrimp.
The shrimp jumps.

"It'll be good for two to three days."

It is still alive.

"Then add 8 shrimps as well."

Roxanne translates my order.
The old lady wraps the shrimp in leaf and puts it in the bucket.
After putting the shrimps in bucket, she counts the fish inside.

"It is 1 Nar for two shrimps. The total will be 12 Nars."

Even though I didn't understand the words, I knew she was counting.
I pay twelve Nars and return home.

Once we entered the labyrinth, Miria told me how to cook them. After that, she went to repair drainage.
Miria doesn't care that the shrimps are alive.

The fish was cut into three, the head of the shrimp was removed, and the back side stripped.
The way to cook shrimps doesn't seem different from the Earth.

Chapter 100 - Skill

A number of people have gathered near the Dobu river.
Seeing from a distance, everyone was dressed quite shabbily.
For sewage cleaning, several slaves have been gathered.
Even the slaves from around the neighborhood have been gathered as well.

No, shouldn't that be natural?
A well is located a short distance away.
Even just fetching water is already a hard job.
Everything's good for me however, since I can just get water by using water wall.

Society seems to be hugely affected by the restrictions in technology.
If you want to live a bit luxurious with the technology of this world, a slave really would be essential.
The hierarchy between the ones who live a good life and those who support them can be seen clearly.
There are many houses that have a slave employed.

There's also the case of science and technology restricting society.
There's no such thing as forensic science in this world.
DNA test, fingerprint system, even the blood type is not even known.

What would happen then?
The investigation that the knights do can't really be called investigation.
If someone is doubtful just from asking questions, he's already proclaimed as the criminal.

In this world without forensics, there isn't such a thing as evidence either.
Because there's no luminol, identifying the murder weapon is impossible too.
A confession or testimonies from eyewitnesses are all that can be relied on as evidence.
If there's a strange person in town, that guy would be blamed as the criminal if anything ever happens.

I lived in a different world and have completely different customs with my neighbors; I don't even remember their faces.
A sociable environment isn't really formed in this world.

Even if one is established temporarily, in case something happens, it would collapse at once.

Quratar is a city where a lot of explorers are gathered.
It's originally the town where most people are strangers.
For this world, the companionship between neighbors isn't much either.

Nevertheless, one still needs to attend a minimal amount of regional activities.
It is troubling for those weird people in case something happens.

What happens in case a robbery or murder occurs?
If there is a guy who did not attend the regional activities, he will be branded the culprit.
They are tortured until they confess.
So that one is not unnecessarily accused, it is necessary to attend the activities.

This is what I understood from the things Sherry told me.
I was completely persuaded to not be truant.
It is a necessary skill to live in this world.
It is the reason why I made Miria participate in the cleaning of the Dobu River.

Of course, one can refute in case of accusation of being a criminal.
A trial will be held.
A trial of ordeal or a trial of battle.

A trial of ordeal, that is to say, a trial based on God.
The defendant is made to pick up a pebble that is put in boiling water.
If the defendant is able to pick it up successfully, then the defendant is innocent, if he fails, however, he is found guilty.

There's also having the defendant's hand and feet bound by ropes and then dropped onto water, the defendant is innocent if he floats and guilty if he doesn't.
Poison is also drunk, and the defendant is proven innocent if he survives.
As for those who are guilty, it already goes without saying.

In the trial of battle, one must fight the accuser, the witness/-es and all else who has testified.

Winning will prove innocence, losing will prove being guilty.
It also saves the trouble of executing those who are guilty, so its two birds with one stone.
I would never want such a trial.

It can't be helped since technology for investigating is underdeveloped.
There isn't any other way of determining criminals.
Even an alibi is uncertain in this world where field walk exists.
It is extremely common as well to decide the culprit by way of lottery.
A person was killed in a certain residence.
There are no traces of anyone coming from the outside.
The suspects are the six people who live in the house.

If it's in a TV drama then this is when an excellent detective will make its appearance, in this world's case however, this is when an excellent dice will make its appearance.
Visually, it's a toy, but in fact it's actually God's representative.
The dice determines which is the culprit using God's intention.

Of course, if five people's testimonies match telling on to the one remaining guy, he will be considered as the criminal.
Then, it becomes a five-on-one battle to prove the sixth man's innocence.
Because it is only disadvantageous for the accused and not those who testified, the difference in the number of people is not considered a problem.

I have three slaves who are all beauties.
It is likely to have already caught people's eyes.
I try to be as discreet as possible, blending in with the surroundings to live properly and brightly.
It is another skill necessary to live in this world.

「Master, a messenger sent by Luke has arrived. He seemed to have gotten a successful bid on a slime monster card.」

Immediately after having sent off Miria, a messenger from Luke has arrived while I was still at home.

「Which skill can be acquired from the slime monster card, Sherry?」
「When applied to protective gear, Physical Damage Reduction is applied, it

is possible to fuse it as well with a kobold monster card to further the effects, but it isn't necessary to go that far.」

It's possible to reduce physical damage?
A slime is really a slime it seems.

「What would be good to put it on? For the time being, should we go to the merchant guild for shopping? 」

We went to the center of Quratar and bought vegetables and the monster card.
If it's put into the hard leather jacket, it would become something only for my exclusive use.
Because there's already Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat and Waterproof Leather Mittens, would shoes be the next one?

It's already good enough if I'm in the rear, If I'm in the front however, I would want to equip it.
Replacing shoes is difficult.
Replacing gloves can be done, though troublesome.
As for equipment I can change easily, it would be the hat.

Though there is still an empty skill slot on the Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat, I'd rather not attach the skill there.
Since the equipment having skills has not yet been publicized.
Once it's known that I applied multiple skills, sooner or later everyone else will be able to do so as well up to some degree.

I handed a leather hat and the slime monster card to Sherry.

It was a hard leather hat to be applied with the skill physical damage reduction.

「I did it.」
「As expected of Sherry.」
「Well done, Sherry.」

Sherry fuses the monster card casually.
Because that was the equipment left by the thieves, there was only one empty skill slot.

I immediately equipped it and went to the labyrinth.
We don't need to help with the river, and there is no reason to wait in the house.
Three people: I, Roxanne and Sherry entered the labyrinth after a long time.

It was all right to go even to the 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
Though it can't be said that there's not really any problems.
I had to receive a lot of blows coming from the demons.
It's good to have made the Hard Leather Hat of Endurance

Because the vanguard role was left to three people including Miria, the burden on me this time is huge.
Because they appear before I can employ Durandal, I wasn't able to weaken them first.
I was able to do this properly before Miria came.
That's what I recall.

I barely dodge the rush of a Pig Hog.
I stared at the pig hog's eyes and cast water storm.
Two pig hogs fall.
An enemy has disappeared in front of my eyes.

It was safe however, the one remaining Grass Bee was being kept occupied by Roxanne.
I drove a breeze ball next to the side of Roxanne who was playing with the Grass Bee with quick movement.
I killed it without difficulty.

Roxanne guides us to the next opponent, a pig hog and two Grass Bees.
Sherry hits the Grass Bee casting a skill with the spear with incantation interruption.
With that, I confronted the Pig Hog.
The Grass Bee emitted a mist of poison
There's no other way, I left the Pig Hog for later.
It was a long battle, but I was somehow only able to receive just one attack throughout all that.

The following group was one Pig Hog together with three Grass Bees.
Roxanne received the range attacks of the Grass Bees using a shield with ease.
While keeping an eye on the bees that came out front, I cast Breeze Storm.

I dodge the charge attack of the Grass Bee
The bee which attacked from the back has its skilled delayed and was forced to fight out front.
It's also necessary to take caution of the Grass Bee's Roxanne's fighting.
I glanced at it from the side and confirmed that it wasn't aiming at me.

It's safe.
The Grass Bee saw me shifting my vision and took it as a chance to attack.
I twisted my body in a panic, but was still hit by its charge.

I cast a fifth breeze storm in revenge.
Three Grass Bees fall.
At the same time my body was flushed and felt painful.

Poison.
I seem to have receive poison from the charge attack of the Grass Bee earlier.
Is it because I haven't worn the Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat?
Probably because it's my second time receiving poison, I was incredibly calm.

It physically hurts.
My chest tightens.
But still, the priority is to defeat the demon.
I threw a Breeze Ball towards the demon.

No, it's wrong.
The opponent is a Pig Hog.
I made a mistake.
I'm actually calm enough to realize that I made a mistake.

I threw a water ball.
My body really hurts.
How much more should I throw?

I threw another water ball.
I can still count how many I threw.
Calm down.

Sherry came in front of me.

The antidote.
The antidote pill.
The mouth-to-mouth feeding.
I try to comprehend the situation.

I embraced Sherry, giving in to my desires, I pressed onto Sherry's lips.
Sucking strongly, the sensation of soft lips is indulged.
On this occasion I should already be satisfied.
I should decide calmly.

I swallowed the antidote pill received from Sherry's mouth.

I chased Sherry's tongue sticking onto it.
Our tongues were intertwined.
The tongue of Sherry was gently responding to my advance.

I am relieved of pain gradually.
The heaviness felt in my body was gone.
My mind also seems to have cleared.

What am I doing?
I should probably just enjoy it as it is.
No. What happened to the demon?
Sherry released my mouth, flustered.

It was good.
The opponent seems to have been annihilated already.

「Thank you, Sherry. I'm already okay.」

I breathe deeply.
Preparing a glass, I poured water using water wall.
I ask Roxanne for mouth to mouth feeding of the water.
After spending ample time, I caught my breath.

The labyrinth is dangerous.
Only one person is missing and the situation became completely different.
We shouldn't overwork ourselves.

We returned to the house earlier than usual.
We've already done a lot of things.

I will heat the bath firsthand.
I poured in water carefully as not to spill it.
I took a bucketful of water from the bath tub that was filled using water wall and set it aside.

Since there might be a little more time before Miria comes back, I heated the water some more.
It will be just us three for a long time while Miria still hasn't come back.
What should we do in such a long period?
I guess it should be the usual.

「I'm back, desu.」

When it was over, Miria came back.
She was covered all over with mud.
Though it was just clothes taken on a bargain from the slave trader, she returned with it all soppy.

「I've told Mira to take off her dirty clothes. You've already prepared the water, and I'll wash her off.」
「I want to wash her myself.」
「Is that so, that's fine. Because Sherry and I already received some affection.」

The acknowledgement of Roxanne who was fussing over her was obtained.
「Miria, sorry for the trouble today. I have already heated up the bath, let's enter together.」
「Bath, desu」

Miria entered the bath.
I washed her whole body beforehand before entering the bathtub.
I washed all her places thoroughly. Without exception.
The whole body of Miria got covered in bubbles as I wash her thoroughly.

After rinsing her with water, Her hair was washed.
After her head, her whole body was washed again.

I washed her twice, just to be safe.
TN: Sure, to be safe..

「Miria, I'm sorry for putting you to work today.」
「Dinner, Fish, desu」
「Seriously?」
「Fish Want, desu」

Though we converse while washing, the conversation naturally shifts because Roxanne is not here as an interpreter.
There seems to have been no fish in the Dobu River.
Sherry and Roxanne came late, and also washed before entering the bath.

「You planted plants?」
「Yes! Desu.」
「Licorice, a plant often planted in the bank of a river. The licorice has poison in the root, flower as well as the leaves, because of that animals don't come near it. The bank is then prevented from collapsing from the burrowing. Besides, the poison comes off when washed off with water so when push comes to shove, it can be an emergency supply of food.」

Sherry explains to me about the so called plant.
The wisdom of life.
There is such a convenient plant in this world.

Diver Lv31, Village chief Lv 1, Pirate Lv 1, Villager Lv 5, Merchant Lv 1, Explorer Lv 1, Warrior Lv 1, Herbalist Lv 1, Swordsman Lv 1, Monk Lv 1.

Miria hasn't been able to acquire the Farmer job.
Even if you plant that poisonous plant, is Farmer job not acquired?
Or is it not to plant, but rather you should be the one to harvest?

「Sherry, please go with Roxanne and prepare soup, I'll be cooking.」
「Certainly.」

Sherry left the bath with Roxanne.
Miria and I remained in the bath however.
We're continuing.
TN: Scene change go!

「Please tell me if you want to eat anything, Is shrimp okay? What does Roxanne want to eat?」

Preparing for supper, I asked Roxanne.
The pan was put on the earthenware stove that's like a charcoal stove. Olive oil is then warmed.
I prepared ingredients and arranged it on the table.
Fish, Shrimp, Sausage, Ham and various vegetables.

The powder that was made from slime starch and shell powder was put into flour, lightly melting it in water then adding egg.
The ingredients were then deep fried.
Sprinkling the powder onto the shrimp then turning on the heat afterwards.

「I , like master, also would like to eat shrimp.」
「I would like the ham.」
「Fish, desu」

Naturally, it would be the fish for Miria.
I add more coating to the shrimp, sliced the ham and deep fried them together with the fish.
In other words, this would be tempura.
I applied a mixture of lemon juice and vinegar before serving it.

「Is it good?」
「The food that master makes is always the best」
「It's delicious」
「Amazing, desu」
I'm the only one that can use chopsticks.
I continued deep frying.
This shrimp tempura can be said to be the same with the tempura from my world. There's a crispy texture with chewy insides.

「Would you try the vegetables next?」
「Thank you.」
「I'll try the mushrooms.」
「Fish, desu」

I used a mushroom which seems to be the same as my world's shiitake mushrooms.
Though I haven't deep fried it, it should taste ok.

「How about the sausages?」
「I like what master likes.」
「I'll eat more shrimp.」
TN: Eat your goddamn sausage.
「Fish, desu」

…

「You guys should also eat the fish before it runs out.」
「Thank you」
「Then I would like one fish as well.」
「Fish, desu」

Before Miria could finish all the fish, I took one and tasted the deep fried fish.
It's crunchy.
The deep-frying went considerably well.

If gluten had formed, the food wouldn't be this crispy and crunchy.
Good thing I used the Slime Starch to reduce the gluten.
Furthermore, Shell Powder that was the equivalent of baking soda was also used.

This would be the art of deep-frying.
TN: apparently the kanji/symbol used for deep-frying is the same as tempura, I used deep-frying instead because I can't imagine a fish tempura or a mushroom tempura.

Chapter 101 - Preparation

We have found the boss room of 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
While exploring, we found a small room.
The door opened, and I walked inside the room.
I immediately understood that it was the waiting room since it had only two doors. One in front and one behind.

"Is the boss room ahead?"
"The boss Pick Hog is the upgraded version of Pig Hog. A really tough monster that attacks using its fore paws. Well, I think Roxanne-san will be alright, but please be careful."

The door inside the room opens.
I bring out Durandal in a hurry.

"The three of you handle Pick Hog, I will take care of Grass Bee."
"Okay."

The monster accompanying the boss was Grass Bee.
I finished it quickly.

I join the attack on Pick Hog.
Pick Hog is the boss of 13th floor. It is one size bigger than Pig Hog.
Its fore paw attack is similar to a drill.
Standing on its hind legs, it swings its fore paw down on Roxanne.

It is similar to what wild boars do on their short legs.
Is it okay not to help?
Such thoughts rushed through my head.
Roxanne lightly avoids its swing.

As expected of Roxanne.
Had I been there instead, I would have been hit.
No, I will never get hit because I always attack from behind.
I cautiously slash using Durandal.

With careful attacks, we manage to defeat Pick Hog without any accident.
Well we had already defeated bosses up to 15th floor in Quratar's labyrinth.
13th floor couldn't have been a problem.

“Sherry, which monster appears on Haruba’s 14th floor?”
“It’s Sarracenia.”

Sarracenia huh?
The carnivorous plant-type monster, Sarracenia, whose weakness is fire magic.
We proceed further on 14th floor under Roxanne’s guidance.
After killing Sarracenia with 5 [Fire Storm]s, I then kill remaining Pig Hogs with 3 more [Water Ball]s.

Next, we fight against a group of three different types of monsters.
First, I kill two Sarracenias using 5 [Fire Storm]s.
After that, I finish one Grass Bee using 3 [Breeze Storm]s, and then I slaughter the remaining Pig Hog with a single [Water Ball].
9 attacks in total huh?

“Hmm… Even though there were three types of monsters, I needed one extra spell to finish them, unless I made an error in the count. Please guide us to another group of three types of monsters.”
“Understood.”

I instruct Roxanne.
The battle duration is longer, but we can fight on Haruba’s 14th floor.
I can finish a group of one type of monsters using 5 spells. If someone survives, Roxanne can deal with them.
That much can not be avoided.

Having reached Haruba’s 14th floor, I move to Bode’s labyrinth in the afternoon.
Every now and then, I drop by Tare’s and Bode’s labyrinths to keep a tab on the progress of their exploration.
There may be an easy floor similar to Quratar’s 16th floor.

“How far has the exploration progressed?”
“11th floor.”

The explorer at the entrance replies.
The exploration of Bode’s and Tare’s labyrinths is progressing slower than Vale’s labyrinth.
Because there are three labyrinths, the Duchy’s order of knights had to split

up.
Or perhaps, they decided to focus on the exploration of Haruba's labyrinth?

The party led by the Duke and Cassia, and also the party led by Gozer were exploring Haruba's labyrinth.
Gozer's party will blaze through Bode's 11th floor in no time.
However, it is probably wasteful for such a high level party as Gozer's to explore 11th floor while they can explore higher floors.
It is rational to break through floors one by one without diverting the focus.

So far, I have not directly contributed to the exploration.
Since it is acceptable to just enter the labyrinth, there doesn't seem to be any problem.
And I defeated Heinz the bandit.
Since it helped the knights in reducing the number of patrols, I helped them at least that much.

"I will stop by the furniture store before heading home."
"Furniture store?"
"The bed is getting smaller for us, we can't keep using it as it is right now."

I thought about it when we were in the small room on Bode's 1st floor.
And I would like to rid myself of this uneasiness as soon as possible.
Whenever I express that I will expand my harem, I get tensed.
Fearing that someone may object.

Nope, I don't plan to increase it just yet.
It is just preparation.
Preparation for when I have to expand it.
So I am feeling a little guilty.

"I see. It would certainly be great. Thank you for caring about us."

I am feeling even more guilty now since the bed is actually for my selfish motives.
I jump to Quratar's adventurers guild and head to the furniture store.

"I don't think we should buy a large one. May be another bed similar in size to the one we have? I am thinking of setting them side-by-side. What do you think?"

I propose that while checking the beds.
The current bed we have is quite large.
It should be able to accommodate 3 more if I add another bed next to it.

I am not sure if two beds can be attached though. It may create a gap in the centre.
Since I sleep in the centre, I would rather not have that.
Depending on how I arrange it, the gap may not be directly below my butt, so there may not be any problem.

“It will be too big.”
“I will eventually increase the number of party members.”

Even though I was tensed, I tried to appear composed.
I must keep reiterating that I will increase the number of party members.
It will be awkward if someone objects when the time comes.

“Is that so?”
“A-Also, it will be wasteful to throw the current bed away.”

I give her another reason in a hurry.
Things may not go as smoothly as I thought.

“I understand. Let’s go with what you said.”
“Next time, can we buy a shelf?”
“Shelf?”

With this, I can use 30% discount.
Since the owner of the furniture store is a merchant, 30% discount should be effective.
The more the party members, the more the luggage. Like I said, it is preparation.

Had I said that I would be buying a shelf and had then suggested buying a bed too, it would probably have been better. Oh well, it’s too late now.
Men play it fair.
They break through the front.

They caress it and shove it in from the front.
Only cowards do it from the back.
I'm envious!

I leave the matter of choosing the shelf to the three.
They will be the ones using the shelves mainly.
So it's better to leave it to them.

Their group, with Roxanne in the middle surrounded by Sherry and Miria, is clamoring while deciding on the shelf.
I'm observing them from the side without throwing in my opinion.
It took them quite some time to choose.
I purchase the bed and the shelf they chose, and return home.

"Stay here until the furniture arrives. We are already done with the labyrinth for today. You guys will be preparing the dinner. In the meantime, I'll head to Vale."
"Vale? Trading house?"
"That's right, but I'm not going there to add another member. I'm going there to gather information in order to make preparation. Also, I have to express my gratitude to the slave merchant for introducing me to the trading house in the Imperial capital."
"I understand."

Roxanne consents.
As for the number of party members; the more, the better.
It is necessary to expand the party.
Roxanne and Sherry both are aware of this.

However, not much time has passed since I bought Sherry.
You don't find beauties like Roxanne and Sherry every time you visit the trading house.
Therefore, this time, I'm going there only to gather information.

There can be up to six people in a party.
You can't randomly add party members.
I must be careful in choosing the next member of the party.

If I go to the trading house in the Imperial capital, there's only that beautiful woman who was unwilling to be my slave.
If I go to Alan, the slave merchant in Vale, he may introduce me to more

trading houses.
And I have one more thing to ask him about.
The slave merchant in the Imperial capital mentioned slave auction.

Sherry may know about it but I can't ask her about such a thing.
So I'll ask Alan, the slave merchant.

"Well then, I'm leaving."
"Okay, take care."
"Take care."
"Take care, desu."

After having been seen off by the three, I leave the house.
I jump to Vale's adventurers guild and head to Alan's trading house thereon.
There's no change in the townscape at all.

"Is the owner here?"
"Wait here, please."

I was led inside after I asked the person who came to receive me.
It's the usual waiting room.

"Oh dear customer, welcome."

Alan appears before long.
I was then led to the back room.

"I went to the trading house in the Imperial capital last time. I thank you for introducing me to that slave merchant."
"Yes, I heard that there was a successful transaction and that both the parties were satisfied."

Even though he was forced to offer me 30% discount?
They have no way of finding it out, it seems.

"We're good for the time being but I intend to add another party member in near future."
"Exploration of labyrinths seems to be going well for you. That's good."
"Thanks to Roxanne and Sherry."

When I went to buy Roxanne, I was short of money, so I had to wait before buying her.
But now I'm intending to buy a fourth slave.
From this slave merchant's viewpoint, things must be going well for me.

"Since I explore labyrinths, quality of party members matters more to me than the number of party members. Therefore, rather than increasing the number of party members in a rush, I'm searching for good combat-ready slaves carefully."
"Well said."

Actually, there's no other option for the party size is limited to six.
And then there's my vigor.
Because I have Sex Maniac, I have to go for more.

"You need a party member that's strong if you are to challenge higher floors. For stronger slaves, you might want to give the slave auction a try."
"Auction?"

Fortunately, the conversation moves to auction without my asking.

"The slave auction is held on holidays, that is four times a year. The slave auction is held at Quratar's merchants guild. On holidays, normal auctions are called off and the guild is reserved for the slave auction only. In the slave auction, many combat-ready slaves, who are suited to be explorer or adventurer, are exhibited."
"And I can pick a strong one from among them?"
"Yes. The entrance fee is 1,000 Nars per person. It is designed to filter out those who attend only out of curiosity and those who try to manipulate the price. In case your bid succeeds, the fee can be appropriated toward the bid."

1,000 Nar is indeed quite high if you're a spectator.
However, to those bidding for slaves in excess of 100,000 Nars, it's not that much.

Furthermore, if my bid succeeds, the fee will be returned.
If all the people attending the auction place a bid in order to have their fee refunded, the price will go up.
Ingenious.

“Would doing so not drive up the price?”
“At the very least, the price can’t be manipulated, I believe.”

The slave merchant grins.

“Will Alan-dono be exhibiting his slaves?”
“Of course, it’s a stage for slave merchants after all. Unfortunately, due to some circumstances, I have let go of the centre of my exhibition’s attraction already.”

That must be Roxanne.
I don’t know what the circumstances were.
If I feel the need to know, I’ll have Roxanne tell me.

Had Roxanne been sold at the auction, it wouldn’t have been for 420,000 Nars.
30% discount isn’t effective in an auction.

That’s right.
There’s a drawback of buying at an auction. 30% discount isn’t effective there.
Should I keep my search restricted to trading houses then?

But there’s less than a month till the next holiday.
It’s likely that they won’t show me their best slaves.
If they have good slaves, they will try to sell them at the auction.
Even if I visit trading houses after the auction, I will only find leftover slaves.

So, should I try the auction even if it’ll cost me a bit more?
Even a bit is a lot for a miser if it comes to money.
However, the charm of the auction is that there will be many to choose from.

“I guess I can find a good member for my party at the auction.”
“Indeed. I look forward to meeting you at the auction.”

I wrap up the conversation and head home.

“There will be an auction on the coming holiday. We will go there to look for a new member for our party. Expansion of our party is necessary to increase our battle strength.”

I talk to the three after returning home.
It is better to make their mind up beforehand.

“I understand.”
“At the auction, we will definitely be able find a good member for our party.”
“Miria wants to be elder sister, desu.”

Like I thought, Sherry knows about the auction.
There’s no knowing if the next member will be younger than Miria though.
Well, she will be senior at least.

“Don’t ask for a little sister for yourself.”
“Okay, desu.”

After that, we try our new bed.

“Roxanne, please cherish it until the number of members increases.”

That doesn’t mean that I won’t love Roxanne anymore.
My love won’t change with the number of members.

Chapter 102 – Whole Fish

We are halfway through 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
When the battles are short, hunting is smooth. The longer the battles get, the more strenuous the hunting becomes.
The monsters here are not as easy for a battle to be over in a flash, but they are not so strong either to get us fired up.

This is rather a concern.
Because the battles here are longer, I may get exposed to consecutive attacks and may get myself into precarious position if I lose my focus.
However, even though I am aware of it, I keep losing my focus.

"Miria!"
"Yes, desu."

I regain my focus with Roxanne's shout.
She was reprimanding Miria.
Miria was going solo again. Although she sticks to the formation, there are times when she goes ahead on her own.
I empathize with her for I tend to lose my focus too.

My thoughts on 14th floor: it's boring and slow.
Finally, only one monster is left. Roxanne is yet to receive an attack.
Her performance is incredible as ever.

In the end, instead of breaking through 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, we decide to check on the progress of the exploration of Bode's labyrinth.

"How far has the exploration progressed?"
"Just reached 12th floor."

We drop by Bode's labyrinth in the afternoon, and ask the explorer at the entrance.

“Which monster appears on 12th floor?”
“Mabream.”
“Mabream, desu!?”

For some reason, Miria repeats after the explorer.
Her serious eyes seek me all of a sudden.

Her serious eyes turn sparkling.
Looks like she wants to bring something up.
I wonder what.

“Mabream is a fish-type monster. It drops white fish.”

Sherry tells me the reason.
Fish huh?
Miria is still staring at me.
Rather than sparkling, her eyes are burning with appetite.

“T-Then can you take me to 12th floor?”

I can not help it.
I take out the emblem of the Harz duchy from my backpack.
Upon seeing the emblem, the explorer joins our party.

“Okay, please follow me.”

Following the explorer, we enter Bode’s labyrinth.
We are in a small room with an ordinary door.
It is the same room you can find on any floor of a labyrinth.
The explorer leaves us here and heads back immediately.

“Mabream is a monster that specializes in long-range water magic attacks. It is resistant to water magic. Earth magic is its weakness.”
“Earth Magic huh? Can I ask of you for a small group since it is our first time fighting against this monster?”

After Sherry briefs, I ask of roxanne to guide us.
Mabream is a fish-type monster. It looks like a fish that has two long legs growing down its body.
Actually, looking only at its head, it looks more like a fish than a fish-type monster.
Nope, I am not sure anymore if it is its head or its body.

To top it off, there are two long and skinny legs stretching out. It is truly disgusting.
Whatever. If they say it's fish-type, then it must be fish-type.
Even though it looks like a badly designed Martian.

I shoot a [Sand Ball].
After 4 shots, it collapses.
Mabream turns into smoke and disperses.
What remained was a white fish.

"Yes, desu!"

Miria jumps at it and brings it over excitedly.
Her eyes seek me again.
What does she want to say? I can guess what she wants.

"This is our dinner for tonight, I guess."
"Okay, desu!"

Miria bows her head.
We already have one, and I will be unnecessarily torturing her if I leave it for tomorrow.
But it looks like it would have been fine even if I had delayed it by a day.

We hunt near the entrance of the floor for a while.
Since the exploration of Bode's 12th floor has only just started,
It is best to not go further inside just yet.

I need the exploration of the floor to progress further in order to avoid the trap room with large number of monsters.
I can't guarantee our safety if we set foot in that trap room.

I cast [Meteor Crash].
The red-hot meteorites crash onto the monsters.
One shot?
Just one [Meteor Crash] seems to be enough for Mabream.

Mabreams seem to be weak against fire magic as well.
How do I know which monsters can be dispatched in one shot and which monsters can't be?
I am getting confused even more.

"Since [Meteor Crash] seems to be effective, I think we can proceed further inside."
"I guess."
"I don't think there will be any problem."
"Instead of searching for monsters, how about we explore this floor?"

I instruct Roxanne to stop searching for monsters.
I felt bored while we were on Haruba's 14th floor.
But here, I might be able to set off some fireworks.

[Metoer Crash] is an area of effect magic attack.
If I were to use it inside a small room with a lot of monsters, it would be massacre.
If they can be killed in one shot, it doesn't matter how many monsters there are.
I want to light things up to let out all the frustration I built up on 14th floor.

While heading deep inside 12th floor, I cast [Meteor Crash].
We are searching for the room packed with monsters, taking out the monsters all the while.
I'm not using [Sand Storm] too much. I'm relying on Durandal to recover my MP.

There's no knowing what may happen inside the labyrinth.
Also, it's possible that they won't be dead in one [Meteor Crash] next time.
I should save some MP for contingencies.

As always, when you try to find something, it is always difficult to find it.
But I carry on searching.
And I have finally found it.
The door opens. When I enter the small room, fish-type monsters were there in the middle.

It's a big catch.
It's a great catch.
It's fishing time.

Unfortunately, there are no seagulls here to set the mood.
As planned, I try to wipe them out in one shot.
I invoke [Meteor Crash].

Suddenly, it feels as if all my MP has vanished.
It feels as if something has left my body.
It feels as if I'm getting engulfed in darkness.

D-Damn it!
How can I be this stupid?
How can I be this foolish?

I had no idea I was this incompetent.
I had no idea my abilities were this lacking.
The consumption of MP of an area of effect magic attack increases with the number of monsters.

If it's not the case, then this is harassment.
May be because I used a bonus spell?
This world is against me.

I'm down.
I'm depressed.

I'm Hayashi Shrio.
When a person doesn't know how to write the kanji for depression, he ends up writing the kanji for Hayashi Shiro.

Hayashi (林)
Shi (四)
Rō (郎)
Looks like
Depression (欝)
Doesn't it?

"As expected of Master."
"All those monsters were wiped out in one shot."
"Amazing, desu."

The monsters seem to be dead, but I can't hear them clearly.
The stress I released earlier is back again.
I intended to release my stress but ended depressed instead.

I open my Item Box.
I swallow a handful of strengthening pills.
Having recovered my MP, I get back on my feet.

So there is such a drawback of using area of effect magic attack.
Because I have been fighting against four or five monsters, I didn't notice it.
One more monster wouldn't have made that much of a difference.
But the room was brimming with monsters.

A lot of dropped items are lying scattered around the room.
Needle Woods, native to Bode's 11th floor, were mixed in as well.
They dropped branches and leaves.
There are a lot of white fish.

Miria excitedly brings something over to me.

“It is whole fish.”
“Whole fish?”
“A rare item dropped by Mabream.”

Sherry tells me.
So it’s a rare drop.

Miria passes the whole fish to me.
It’s whole indeed, complete with head and tail.
Even Appraisal says ‘whole fish’.

“Then this, too, will be for tonight’s dinner.”
“Eat, desu!”
“It’s a rare drop and will sell for a high price. Are you sure about this?”
“Whole fish is rare. It is usually eaten on special occasions.”

Roxanne and Sherry urge me to reconsider.
In this world, it seems to be eaten on special days.
Even though a lot of white fish were dropped by the monsters, there was only one whole fish.
It does seem to be quite rare.

“Oh well, it is too much for one person anyway.”

The whole fish is bigger than even my hands. Twenty? Thirty? No, about forty centimeters.
Even a piece of it will be more than enough for a person.
However, If it is Miria, I’m sure she can eat it all by herself.

“A small piece is fine. Miria, too, says that she is fine with a small piece.”
“The head of the family eats the first piece of whole fish. The rest is distributed among the family members.”

So it is not one for everyone kind of fish huh?
Although we got only one whole fish, I decide to stop exploration of Bode’s 12th floor.
I still have no idea how to keep stress from building up, but we resume the

exploration of Haruba's 14th floor nevertheless.
We return home in the evening.

"Master, there is a message from Luke, the broker. There seemed to be a successful bid for Bat Monster Card."

When we arrived at home, there was a note left by Luke, the broker.
The process of upgrading equipment seems to be going smoothly.

"It increases rate of evasion if fused with an armor. If fused simultaneously with Kobold Monster Card, the effect gets doubled."

Sherry starts explaining the moment I look at her.
She seems to have learned her role well by now.

For dinner, Miria simmers the whole fish with wine and fish sauce.
Salt doesn't seem to have been added.
The flavor is similar to Mediterranean cuisine, Acqua Pazza.
(TN:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acqua_pazza_%28food%29)
"Wow! It's really delicious."

I first show them how to use chopsticks.
Although there's fat, the texture is firm.
Yet it melts in the mouth.
Delicious!

As expected of a rare drop.
White fish doesn't come even close.

After me, Roxanne and Sherry help themselves to the boiled fish prepared by Miria.

"It is delicious."

They're delightfully eating the boiled whole fish.
Their smile is delightful indeed.

“Can I have a little more.”
“Yes, desu.”

During the meal, the fish was distributed by Miria.
Was preparing white fish along with whole fish a bad idea? We didn’t get to it because of the whole fish.
It would have been even better had there not been that unpleasant look about Miria’s face while distributing the fish.
It gave the feeling that something was off.

Next Morning. I collect the Bat Monster Card from the merchants guild.
I immediately hand it to Sherry upon returning home.

“Roxanne, take off your shoes and pass them to me.”
“Wha- okay.”

Roxanne takes off her hard leather shoes.
And puts them on the table.
It will be a good idea to enhance Roxanne’s equipment this time.

Apart from Sacrificial Misanga, there is a need to enhance her equipment more than others’.
In order to compensate for the drop in her level.
Roxanne can dodge most of the attacks and hardly gets hit, so it is not necessary to enhance her armor.
Therefore, I need to attach those skills to Roxanne’s equipment that match her fighting style.

This skill increases rate of evasion which is perfect for her.
Sherry and Miria are not receiving attacks that frequently, so it is not needed to increase their evasive ability for the time being.
As for me, when I head out to the front, I equip Durandal, so I can compensate for it with Durandal’s HP Absorption skill.
Roxanne will make full use of this skill.

Since Kobold Monster Card will only double the effect, I don’t see its need at this point.

I am thankful for that.
Another successful bid for Kobold Monster Card will take more time and money.
And it may be a good idea to first try the skill out before using Kobold Monster Card.

“Well then, can you please fuse the card with these shoes?”
“Certainly.”

Sherry picks up the hard leather shoes, with one free skill slot, which we looted from the thieves.
She performs the card fusion casually.
She is completely used to it by now.

“As expected of Sherry.”
“Brilliant as always.”
“I did it!”
“Amazing, desu.”

When I use Appraisal, it was showing as Hard Leather Shoes of Willow.
Is willow used here to draw comparison with the wind?

“I plan on having everyone try it, but Roxanne will have a go first.”
“Okay.”

I pass the Hard Leather Shoes of Willow to Roxanne.
Once Roxanne had equipped it, we moved to Haruba’s 14th floor.

From what I saw, there was no apparent change after she equipped it.
Well, even before she equipped it, the monsters hardly ever managed to land attacks on her.
If it is just about evading attacks of the monsters, it is the same as before.

I borrow the shoes from Roxanne to try it out myself.
I don’t feel any change in particular.
It’s just that there is no apparent change like when I use bonus points to increase my status or when I change jobs or when I level up.

I even try to suicide attack a monster using Durandal, but I still don't feel any significant difference.
Well, it did become easier to evade the attacks than before to some extent.
If the difference was considerable, I wouldn't hate it this much.
If I look at the total number of attacks received, it has probably decreased.

I let Sherry and Miria try it out as well.
Albeit slightly, the number of attacks received has decreased.
Well, they hardly receive attacks to begin with.

Still, Hard Leather Shoes of Willow could prove to be a good equipment for Roxanne.
At some point, it may be a good idea to decrease the attacks received by Sherry and Miria as It will increase the efficiency of hunting. But it is not a matter to consider for now.

"This equipment will be for Roxanne. Are you fine with it?"
"It's a good idea."
"Okay, desu."

I confirm with Sherry and Miria.

"So Roxanne, it's yours from now on."
"It is better than Master's equipment, Master should be the one to use it."
"I have tried it already. It will be more effective if Roxanne uses it."
"Okay, thank you."

Roxanne bows her head.
To make her stronger, the Hard Leather Shoes of Willow were hence passed to Roxanne.

Chapter 103 - Coming across

We have cleared 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
When it comes to labyrinths, Haruba's and Quratar's are the best.
There's no such thing as finding the boss right at the entrance.
Exploring a floor takes time.

While there are instances of finding the boss room in the left having started the exploration from the left, there are instances of finding the boss room in the right having started the exploration from the left, too.
The time required to clear a floor depends mainly on luck. Nothing can be done about it.
In case of 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, the time required was short.

The objective of our party is not just exploration.
Because we have Roxanne in our party, we can hunt efficiently as well.
For this reason, we keep moving from here to there to somewhere else.
Which increases the time required to clear a floor.

But there's no knowing when you may find yourself at a dead end, so gaining experience in the meantime is efficient.
There's also a possibility that we can't take out monsters on a floor.
Therefore, efficiency aside, you have to keep leveling up or the floors may become too difficult to clear.
Even though we are stronger by the standards of this world, the difficulty increases with every floor.

That said, there's no such thing as safety margin.
Even if you're adequately leveled, one wrong step in labyrinth may lead to your undoing.
It is also said that you can be surrounded by multiple groups of monsters if you take too long to exterminate a group of monsters.

If you laugh at incompetence of others, others will soon laugh at you.
In labyrinth, survival is the top priority.
It's a noteworthy horse that can return its rider to safety.

“Can we perform well on higher floors with the level of our strength?”
“Umm… well, that’s…”

Sherry finds it difficult to answer my question.

“Forget about it, what about other parties?”
“If there are combat slaves in the party, they go for higher floors as much as possible.”
“Is that so?”
“Yes.”

Roxanne answers in Sherry’s stead.

“Umm… they try to go for higher floors as much as possible. The higher the experience you gain, the quicker you become strong. Although the danger on higher floors is great, it doesn’t mean that total annihilation is the only outcome of failure. Owner of the party normally has access to recovery magic and recovery medicines, therefore, the danger to the owner of the party is not as great.”

Sherry explains.
In other words, slaves are sacrificed in emergency situations?
Although the danger is great on higher floors, combat slaves are subjected to most of that danger.
The risk to the owner is minimal.

Now I know why sherry was hesitating.
If the owner doesn’t know that, it’s better for the slaves.
Combat slaves have it tough after all.

“But there will be no such thing in our party. It will be troublesome for me if Roxanne, Sherry and Miria are not there.”
“Thank you very much. Still, it’s better to go for higher floors.”
“Okay, thank you very much.”
“Party members are irreplaceable.”
“…Thank you, desu.”

Miria was the last to express her gratitude because she was waiting for Roxanne to translate.

The boss of Haruba's 14th floor was Nepenthes which we had already defeated on Quratar's 12th floor.
The Nepenthes couldn't land an attack on Roxanne, the dodging ability of whom had increased even more due to Hard Leather Shoes of Willow.
I was in charge of attacking the boss.

"Which monster appears on 15th floor of Haruba's labyrinth?"
"Bitch Butterfly."
"Its weakness is wind magic, right?"

After defeating the boss of 14th floor, I ask Sherry.

"It is."
"Because we have already fought against Bitch Butterflies on Quratar's 16th floor, we can afford to skip trial, Roxanne."
"Try to search for groups with more Bitch Butterflies than Sarracenias."

Sherry interrupts.

"Why?"
"Have you forgotten that Bitch Butterflies are resistant to fire magic?"

They are?
I don't remember hearing such a thing before.
She always briefs about the attribute of magic which the monsters are weak against.
Or perhaps I didn't pay attention to any information more than that?

If I use [Fire Storm] against a group of Sarracenias and Bitch Butterflies, I may be able to take out Sarracenias but Bitch Butterflies will still be standing.
I need to be more careful regarding composition of monster groups, it seems.
Since I'm a Wizard, I'm surprisingly able to use my head.

“I see. As expected of Sherry. From now on, I will ask for your input before issuing instructions.”
“Okay.”
“Well then, Roxanne.”
“Understood.”

The first group Roxanne guides us to comprises two Bitch Butterflies and a Sarracenia.
I first take the Bitch Butterflies out in six [Breeze Storm]s.
With three more [Fire Ball]s, the remaining Sarracenia drops down.
The monsters seem to be becoming stronger which is within expectation.

“Sherry, do magic attacks not work at all against magic resistance?”
“I don’t think there’s such a thing. But I don’t know exactly how effective it is. And it also differs from monster to monster. I’m sorry.”
“Should we test it then? Roxanne, search for a group with more Sarracenias than Bitch Butterflies.”
“Understood.”

I ask of Roxanne.
We find a group of one Bitch Butterfly and two Sarracenias.
The Sarracenias drop down in six fire spells. The Bitch Butterfly collapses in four more wind spells.
Four spells huh?
Not as much as I thought.

“Guide us to groups with more Sarracenias.”
“I see. Understood.”

There are a maximum of four monsters in a group on 15th floor.
If Sarracenias are more, Bitch Butterflies can be no more than one.
If there are two of each, we first take Bitch Butterflies out.
The higher the floor, the more difficult it gets. With the number of attacks required increasing by one, duration of battle increases as well. It may become quicker with [Transcending Life and Death] but it’s not useable for the time being. (TN: Ignore Life and Death has been changed to Transcending Life and Death.)

“Thank you, Sherry. Had I not tested it, I wouldn’t have got it.”
“Not at all.”

Six fire spells inflict damage to Bitch Butterflies equivalent to two wind spells.
It’s quite a difference now that I think about it.
It’s important to take magic resistance into account as well when shortlisting combination of monsters.

I try to use [Meteor Crash] next.
I was able to take out Sarracenias in one shot but Bitch Butterfly is still standing.

As a result, I have understood one thing.
To confirm it, I undertake another experiment.
I move to 12th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth and use [Meteor Crash] on Grass Bees.
Grass Bees turn into smoke in just one [Meteor Crash].

Because I have leveled up, I was able to take out Grass Bees in one shot.
Is that why I was able to take out Mabream Lv12 in one shot?
So it wasn’t due to attribute of magic.
To confirm my notion, I have to try a floor where I can take out Sarracenias or Fly Traps, but not Bitch butterflies or grass bees, in one shot.

“Which reminds me, I once fried the goat meat dropped by Pan after marinating it in fish sauce.”

I talk to Miria.
It’s the Tatsuta-age I made back in the days.

“Okay.”
“If I do the same with fish, it’ll be delicious, right?”

It’s believed that bream tempura is so delicious that Tokugawa Ieyasu deteriorated his health from excessively eating it which resulted in his death.

It will be a similar dish.
Moreover, it will be a whole fish.
It will surely be delicious.

“Eat, desu!”

It was an expected reply.

“But we can’t eat it tonight because it has to kept for some time after applying fish sauce. We will have it for tomorrow’s dinner. It will be to celebrate our clearing 14th floor. Roxanne, Sherry, are you fine with it?”
“Yes, thank you very much.”
“I think it will be delicious.”

With the approval of the two, we move to 12th floor of Bode’s labyrinth.
I take Mabreams out in four [Sand Storm]s.
Four spells without Monk?

The monsters turn into smoke.
And dissipate.
One of the dropped items was whole fish.
This fish will be for the tomorrow’s dinner.

“Wow, desu!”

Miria jumps at it and brings it over to me immediately.

“It is quite rare for Mabream to drop whole fish. As expected of Master, you have got a whole fish at the first attempt.”

The reason as to why I don’t have Monk is that I had already replaced it with Cook.
Cook has a skill that increases drop rate of rare items.
Even then, I was quite lucky to have got a whole fish at the first attempt.
I don’t mind it, however, for Miria respects me even more now.

I receive the whole fish from Miria.
Although it's whole fish, it has neither bones nor internal organs.
Also, how can a monster, Mabream in this case, remain after it's dead.
How can this be possible?

"It is believed that every Mabream has a bream in its body. Therefore, it's also called Bream's Bream."

Sherrys tells the puzzled me.
Is that why it looks the same as the monster?

Oh well, it doesn't matter.
We carry on hunting.
We have collected two whole fish after hunting about ten Mabreams.

"Whole fish, desu!"

Miria brings it over.
She seems to have learned this brahim word.
I put it in my Item Box.

"I have heard that whole fish doesn't stay good to eat for too long."
"Miria is saying the same. As expected of Master."
"Ah, but I have also heard that it stays good for long if cooked."

Sherry, who seems to be hesitant, is correct.
As you would expect from Sherry.
I nod to Sherry and decide to leave.
With two whole fish, Miria will surely be satisfied.

"Umm… Master, I'm sorry."

When we were about to leave, Roxanne apologizes all of a sudden.

"What happened?"
"I can smell an acquaintance. They're coming here from the entrance."
"Acquaintance?"

This is such a convenient ability she has.

“You should better leave. Because I’m in close proximity to them, they must have smelled me. If I leave, they may get suspicious of me.”
“Are they not a friendly acquaintance?”
“Sort of.”
“Is that so?”

This acquaintance is someone Roxanne doesn’t want me to see.
However, using [Warp] now doesn’t seem to be a wise decision.
If Roxanne can smell them from here, they must have smelled us from there.
If I run away now, they’ll find out.

This can be such an inconvenient ability at times.

If they ever visit 12th floor of Bode’s labyrinth, we may encounter them again.
Miria will surely want more fish.
If they have smelled us on 12th floor of Bode’s labyrinth, Haruba’s labyrinth won’t be safe either.

“If they are close to us, they must have smelled me, too.”
“There’s no helping it then. Let’s wait here.”
“I’m sorry. They may say strange things, please don’t pay any mind to them.”
“Are they really that despicable?”

Roxanne seems to detest them.
She will hate to meet her acquaintances after becoming a slave even if she doesn’t hate them.
And if she hates them, she will hate to meet them even more after becoming a slave.

“They are a sworn enemy from back in the days.”
“No matter what happens, Roxanne has allies now.”
“Thank you very much, Master.”

I try to provide support to Roxanne.
I gently put my hand on her shoulder.
I put the Rod of Offerings back in my Item Box and wait for this acquaintance of Roxanne.

“Ohoho~ if it isn’t Roxanne.”

A party of six appears before long.
A party of four beast warriors, an adventurer and a monk.
Their levels are quite high.
Beast Warrior… Lv99!?

“Long time no see.”
“Even though it has been such a long time, you’re still a stupid woman as ever.”

The one having conversation with Roxanne is a female Beast Warrior Lv29.
Appraisal shows her as a female.
She’s 19. Three years older than Roxanne.
Is this woman the acquaintance of Roxanne?

About her looks, no comments.
There’s no comparison with Roxanne.

“You haven’t changed either.”
“Don’t you compare the now-me with the previous-me! I have been gaining strength for all these six months!”
“Really?”

This woman’s social status seems to be higher than Roxanne’s for she has slightly lowered herself.
She seems to have a family name as well.
A person having a family name seems to be rare in this world.

Her pride seems to be bloated, too.
Her long hair is curled into drills.
Her hair is shiny like a doll’s.

Doolittle was the first ever air-raid on Japan. (TN: Romaji for ‘shiny like a doll’ looks like romaji for ‘Doolittle’.)

Women of low social status can’t grow long hair.
Hair care being the reason.
It’s a proof that she can spend on her hair.
It’s a proof that she’s wealthy.

“Albeit faint, I caught your seedy smell while we were on our way to the labyrinth. This much is nothing for me.”

Didn’t Roxanne say that they were at the entrance?

“What brings you here?”
“Roxanne, you’re still an illiterate woman who knows nothing. I feel so pity for you that I can’t help but tell you. Simon the mad dog has become active as of late. His wanted posters have been circulated as well. My family don’t want anything to do with him but they can’t ignore the prospect of bounty.”
“Simon the mad dog huh?”
“Simon the mad dog was one of the two experts of wolfkin tribe. He defeated Sabo once but this time, we will prove that Baradam family is the strongest in the tribe.”

Sabo Baradam is the male Beast Warrior Lv99 who is standing beside her.
He does look strong.
He’s Lv99 after all.

“Err…”

Roxanne appears to be troubled to speak.
Because Simon is already dead.
It’s impossible for Sabo to defeat him now.
But there is no evidence.

“You’re still an undisciplined woman as ever. Although you are able to speak Brahim somewhat, you don’t seem to be fluent at it yet.”

This woman seems to have misunderstood the reason as to why Roxanne was faltering.
She thinks that Roxanne is unable to speak because she's not good at Brahim.

"Err… not at all."
"Your turning into a slave was actually helpful. I must thank you for that. It's regretful that, due to various reasons, your family couldn't earn enough."
"To do such a thing… you!"

Roxanne is at a loss for words at the woman's revelation.
I have heard about it before.
That Roxanne was sold into slavery because her family couldn't pay tax.
So it was all plotted by this woman?

"It was easy for me with the influence of my Baradam family. The reason as to why I did this is because you, Roxanne, are a bitch who seduces men!"
"I don't."
"Although you're denying with words, your actions speak louder. How many men have you seduced already?"
"I know because the eyes they look at you with are totally different from the eyes they look at me with! I know because he was my fiance!"
"I have no idea what you're talking about."

I see.
So it was same for the men of wolfkin tribe, too.
Her chest is just that alluring.
It was inevitable.

"Now that you're a slave, you have seduced a weak human. Well, this is what you were famous for. Seducing, that is."
"Please refrain from using ill words for my Master!"

Roxanne raises her voice.

Chapter 104 - Duel

“Oh my, is Roxanne ordering me now?”

Upon Roxanne’s raising her voice, the eyes of her unfriendly acquaintance turn into that of a sworn enemy’s.

“Not at all. I don’t mind your speaking ill of me but I won’t allow you to speak ill of my Master.”
“Then I challenge you to a duel.”
“Duel?”
“If you want me to respect your master, you will have to make me respect your master. So Roxanne’s master, would you please allow your slave to have a duel with me?”

The woman loosens her cheeks and forces a smile.
Roxanne turns toward me.

“Master…”
“I will issue the challenge to you if the duel between Roxanne and I receives your acknowledgement.”
“What is this about?”
“Only free people can take part in duels, therefore, challenge to a duel is issued only to a free person. However, it is not necessary for you to take part in the duel yourself. You can nominate your proxy. It is a slave’s duty to protect their master after all.”

Sherry explains.
No, I wanted you to explain this situation, not duel.
Roxanne and the woman were talking too much too fast, so I couldn’t follow their conversation.

“If you nominate Roxanne to take part in the duel in your stead, I will issue the challenge to you.”

This woman isn’t explaining the situation either.

Roxanne is a slave, so the challenge can't be issued to her.
This woman can issue the challenge to me and I can nominate Roxanne to be my proxy.
If I don't accept her challenge, will this woman not be able to have a duel with Roxanne?

So in this world, people challenge others in duels, not in courts?
Duels seem to be common here.
It's troublesome, however, that duels are so common here.

"Is she stronger than you?"

I whisper in Roxanne's ear.
If we compare their levels, Roxanne who's Beast Warrior Lv32 should be stronger than this woman who's Beast Warrior Lv29.
If the odds are in our favor, I may accept her challenge.

"We took part in a mock battle about half a year ago. Most of my attacks missed."
"And her attacks?"
"I didn't let her hit me, of course."

Yeah, of course.

"I don't know what cowardly methods you used six months ago to pull a draw but the me now is a lot stronger than the me six months ago. This time, I won't let you run away with your tail between your legs like a bitch that you are. I will crush you completely."

Roxanne, too, has become a lot stronger in these six months, just so you know.
Half a year ago, she must have been Beast Warrior Lv6 at most.
This woman, who is Beast Warrior Lv29 now, couldn't have been below Lv6 half a year ago.

“Master, please allow me.”
“Only if you think you can win.”
“W-What might you mean by that?”

The woman seems to disagree with Roxanne’s and my conversation.

“I can’t imagine Roxanne losing but-”
“Then please accept the challenge and allow me to shatter the disillusions of both the master and the slave.”

This is troublesome.
Because it’s a duel, I might even lose Roxanne if she loses on an off chance.
This really is troublesome.
That said, I can’t imagine Roxanne losing to this woman.

Even if I win, there is nothing for me to gain from this duel.
This is troublesome indeed.

“Having come all the way here and having issued the challenge, it will be an insult to our Baradam family if you turn us down. Or do you perhaps want me to issue the challenge?”

Sabo, Beast Warrior Lv99, who has been keeping quiet till now, opens his mouth.

“Master, Sabo is the strongest Beast Warrior in our tribe. Please let me have a duel with her.”
“I don’t think I will lose to him, though.”

He’s Lv99, don’t you know?

“What did you say!? I will not allow this woman to slander me like this!”

Sabo gets angry.

I thought that he was obediently following the woman but it doesn’t seem to be the case.

Still, I have no idea as to why this woman thinks she can defeat Roxanne.
Are they perhaps on to something?
Have they got a hold of some special item or spell?

“I don’t think Roxanne-san will lose to her. Even if it happens on an off chance, she has ‘that’.”

Sherry whispers in my ear.
By ‘that’, does she mean Sacrificial Misanga?
Roxanne and the woman both have Sacrificial Misanga equipped.
However, even if you have Sacrificial Misanga, it can’t keep you from getting hit.

“It’s a waste to give such a precious equipment to the likes of Roxanne. However, if she drops to her knees during the duel and begs for her life, I may spare her. Baradam family is famous for their benevolence after all.”

She seems to have heard Sherry’s words.
And she probably understands the meaning of ‘that’.
Well, she has one too, so it’s not surprising.
However, it will be this woman who’ll be asking for mercy if it comes that.

“Okay, okay. I get it.”

I don’t think I have any other option but to accede to this duel between these two.

“Thank you very much, Master.”
“Ohoho~ you have finally accepted. Roxanne, you better not be regretting it now. Well then, let’s head to the office of Harz duchy knights. If you back away now, it will really be distasteful.”

The woman turns around and heads toward the exit.
Other members of her party follow behind her.

“Will it be alright?”
“It’ll be alright. There is no monster near the small room at the entrance.”

When I ask Roxanne, she bows in respect and answers.
I didn't ask about that.

"Permission of the order of knights is required for a duel. We should go, too."

Sherry, too, bows in respect and advises.
Because I grew up in modern Japan, this affair seems awkward to me.
Duels are so common here yet I had never heard about it till now.

Are duels really that common in this world?
Roxanne's and Sherry's attitude suggests so, at least.
I let out a heavy sigh and head to the exit.

"Wait here."

When we arrive at the castle of Bode, the woman enters inside by herself.
Shortly afterwards, she comes back with Gozer.

"I, Gozer of the order of Harz duchy knights, confirm that she's a free person."

Gozer raises his eyebrow upon seeing me but continues without any hesitation.
Because as a third party, he is supposed to be neutral.

"Okay."

Roxanne takes a step forward.

"It will be Roxanne, huh? Do you have any objection to the duel?"
"None."
"Well then, the challenge to the duel, issued in accordance with the principle of self-defense, has been accepted. You have the right to nominate a proxy. Do you want to nominate a proxy?"
"No."

Upon Roxanne's answer, Gozer glances at me.
Did he think that I would fight myself?

"The other party wants the duel to be private. Do you accept?"
"Because I'm afraid that you will be using cowardly methods yet again."

The woman explains the reason.
I don't understand the logic behind this reason, though.

Roxanne turns toward me.
Well, I don't want to make it public either.
I nod in approval.

"I accept."
"Alright then, only the members of the two parties will be allowed."

Gozer heads inside the castle.

"I will not let you escape this time."

The woman stomps the ground and goes ahead.
We follow them inside.

Gozer leads us to a corner in the courtyard of the castle.
There are neither trees, nor grass. Weed is growing sparsely.
Is it a training ground for the knights.

"Is this the place?"
"Because you don't want to do it publicly, I had to prepare an appropriate place immediately."
"Most of the duels are private, therefore, the order of knights keep a place ready."

Sherry whispers in my ear.
So that the duel can be started right away?

"Roxanne, would you like to use my sword?"

If you are to fight immediately, at least take Durandal with you.
Durandal has both [HP Absorption] and [Incantation Interruption] skills.
I may be exposing it to Gozer but there's no helping it.

"There's no need. I'm more apt at using one-handed swords."

Roxanne declines my offer.
Is that so?

I may pull out another bonus equipment but it will be a bad idea to go into the duel with a weapon which she's not familiar with.
I may give her a full face helm in that case.
But they may raise an objection if I help her out with my equipment.

I have seven jobs at the moment. Is it alright to have so many active jobs?
Job effects are shared by all party members.
I have yet to test the accurate effect of seventh job, though.

I select bonus spell, [Partilization].
I haven't used it yet but it shares the effect of an item with a party member.
If I consume recovery medicine, Roxanne will be recovered.

I select [MP Full Release], too.
For contingencies.
Even though Roxanne and Sherry know about it, Gozer doesn't.
It's distasteful to help her in the midst of a duel but I can't afford to lose Roxanne.

I select [Lv99 Death] as well.
I have already confirmed that it's a single target magic attack.
Single target magic attack can be used against people.

I open Party Job Settings interface and switch Roxanne's job back to Beast Warrior Lv32.
Was it a bad decision to have had her level Warrior up all this time?
Well, I'm sure she can win against the woman even with Warrior Lv25.

“Here, desu.”
“Thank you, Miria.”

Miria passes a hard leather hat to Roxanne.
Roxanne had Hard Leather Shoes of Willow equipped beforehand.
I’m not sure if it’s necessary but it’s better to go in there with the best possible equipment.

“Would you two please come in front?”
“Coming.”
“Roxanne, losing is not an option.”
“Sister, all the best, desu.”

Both of them proceed.

“Ohoho~ in a duel, lives are on the line. I hope you are prepared, Roxanne. I won’t allow you to drop to your knees and beg for your life. Today shall be the day you die.”

The woman goes back on her words just like that.
Baradam family doesn’t seem to be as benevolent as she claimed.

“Ready.”
“Let me tell you something, Roxanne. Six months back, I didn’t have any party member but this time, I have Sabo. Baradam family is concentrating all their efforts on Sabo. He has already consumed a lot of dope medicine. You understand what that means, right?”

Like I thought, dope medicine seems to be a level-up item.
Is it because of dope medicine that he’s Beast Warrior Lv99?

Job effects are shared by all party members and the effects increase with level.
At Lv99, the effects must be considerable.
So the odds of her victory rest with her party members, huh?

"…"
"You seem to understand the meaning. Serves you right. Well then, drop dead already!"

The woman keeps taunting while Roxanne stands there silently, holding her sword.
She tightens the grip on her sword and swings it.
Roxanne lowers her body slightly and dodges it.
She follows it up with another downward swing. Roxanne dodges yet again.

So far, so good.
Roxanne is composed as ever.
Even with shared job effects of a Lv99 party member, this woman is unable to hit Roxanne.

Roxanne dodges yet another attack of the woman.
With the least possible movement, she is avoiding the oncoming slashes.
She sways her head to dodge the point of the sword and then draws her shoulder back from the line of the sword.

Because the woman was already committed to the attack, Roxanne thrusts her rapier after dodging the attack.
The woman jumps back and then falls over.

"I'm a lot stronger than I was six months ago. How can she still dodge my attacks?"
"Kuku~ you attack recklessly as ever."

The woman stands up angrily and voices hatefully.
She swings her sword again.
Roxanne lightly sidesteps.

"You were stronger six months ago."

Nope. It's Roxanne who has become a lot stronger.
It doesn't mean that her opponent has weakened.

“Even though I’m so close… why…? How…?”

Sigh
This won’t work against Roxanne.

Roxanne tends to dodge attacks by a hair’s breadth.
Because at this distance, the opponent completely commits to the attack.
Having missed their attack after coming so close, the opponent tends to think that they can land the next attack.

The reason being, their sword misses by a centimeter- no, a millimeter.
Normally, it is impossible to achieve such a feat over and over again.
Therefore, they tend to perceive it as a fluke.

When this woman engaged Roxanne in a mock battle six months ago, she must have had similar train of thought.
Therefore, she thought that she could win next time.
But the result is same.

Like I suspected, it’s Roxanne whose ability far surpasses others’.
Being a Beast Warrior Lv6, she was able pull a draw against a Beast Warrior Lv29.
And now that she’s a Beast Warrior Lv32.
It’s not a contest anymore.

“I knew that I had become stronger in Master’s company, so I wanted to measure the level of my strength but this battle is not serving the purpose.”
“Kuh! This can’t be happening!”
“Are you done?”

Roxanne expresses her loss of interest and thrusts her sword.
Her rapier hits the throat of the woman.
The thrust pushes her away.

The woman falls over.
Flat on her back.

One hit was enough for her.
One thrust of Roxanne's rapier.
It won't be funny if she's dead already.

"N-Not yet…"

Albeit shakily, the woman is trying to stand up.
While she was trying to stand up, a string falls down her knee.

It's Sacrificial Misanga.
Was one attack of Roxanne enough to kill her?
When I used Appraisal, Sacrificial Misanga had disappeared from the list of her equipment.

This woman understands it as well.
That there's no use in standing up now.
Next time, there won't be any Sacrificial Misanga to her rescue.

"Although you plotted for my family to become poor, I must thank you.
Because of you, I was able to meet such a splendid Master."

Roxanne firms the grip on her sword.
One more stab and it will be the end.

"Roxanne."

I call out to her.
It's enough.
It's better to end it as is.
There's no need for Roxanne to dirty her hands.

Chapter 105 - Round two

“It’s alright?”

Roxanne took a few steps back, and then turned to look at the woman.
She looks at my expression, and seems to have guessed what I want to say.

“I don’t mind.”
“This match, it would become a draw.”
“That’s fine… isn’t it?”

I check with Sherry.

“There isn’t any problem, so it’s alright.”

After hearing Sherry’s answer with a doubtful look, I beckoned to Roxanne.
It’s better to make Roxanne leave it like this.

“Use this.”

A voice from one of the opponents party members calls out.
It seems to be Sabo.

“But…”
“It’s okay. He didn’t give her a sacrificial misanga. Now you can have an honorable draw.
“Ah, but…”

What is Sabo saying?
What is an honorable draw?

“I did my best.”
“You did.”
“As expected of Roxanne.”
“It was great-desu.”

Something still seems to be happening, and Roxanne is paying attention without being negligent.
The opponent on the ground isn't moving anymore.
This is how it looks when the match is over.
This is the end of it.

"I'm always watching Master fighting, and I was wondering if I was able to become a little stronger myself."
"I see."
"The results of being trained by Master."

I don't think it's just that.

"The other party is giving up, do you want to end in a draw?"

Gozer comes closer and asks.

"Yes."

Roxanne answers, after glancing my way to see me nod.

"Is that alright for you too?"

Gozer goes to the opponents party and asks.
Sabo steps forward.

"There's no other choice."
"Then, this duel is a draw."

After Sabo gives his answer, Gozer declares it.
Sabo comes forward.
He approaches the woman sitting down.

"You are a disgrace to the Baradam house."

Sabo wields his sword.
He beheads the woman.

“Aaa.”

What the…
My voice leaks out accidentally.

“I handed her a suicide ball, and I thought she would use it rather than suffer defeat. For someone not willing to go to those lengths, we have no use for them in the Baradam household.”

Sabo disregards the dead woman, and makes a declaration.
The suicide ball is an item that does large damage to an enemy in exchange for your life.
Is that what he meant by honorable draw? A double K.O?

“What have you done?”

Gozer steps in.

“This is a problem for the Baradam household. This woman is under my control as the head of the Baradam house. There is no problem in this treatment.”
“I understand. I will check your intelligence card to confirm it.”

You understand it Gozer?
Gozer withdrew his objection easily.
Even if murder is performed in front of your eyes, it seems there is no problem if it’s a household issue.

“The draw is convenient. This is a disgrace against the Baradam house. We lost the duel, and it’s a great dishonor that the decisive blow was not given. For this disgrace I demand a duel with that woman.”

While showing Gozer his intelligence card, Sabo points at Roxanne.

“A rematch from a side that lost a duel can be refused. However, that isn’t the case this time because it was a draw.”

Sherry informs me.
So, a draw is no good?
There can be a rematch if it's a draw.
It wasn't good after all.

"Can we run away?"
"We'll be a laughing stock if we do."
"Please let me handle it."

If you live, but are laughed at, it's still better to escape.
That's what I think, but Roxanne won't agree.

"I've taken 50 doping pills by instruction. It will be good if you are prepared."
"The theory says that he can't get any stronger even if he takes more than 50."

Sherry explains Sabo's words.
The theory that doping pills raise your level but not your overall skills seems to be promising.
If he increased his level by 50, did he raise his level to 49 himself?

Is that how it is?
Is Roxanne stronger?
Roxanne would be stronger if you consider his Lv99 to be just Lv49.
If the attacks of a Lv29 could not touch her at Beast Warrior Lv6, then the attacks of a Lv49 might still not touch a Beast Warrior Lv32.

"Well, I'll handle this one myself."
"Um, well, Sabo's strength is well known. It would be dangerous."
"If Roxanne did it, it would be too easy a win."

Would it be bad?
There's the chance that his level was above Lv49, and some of the doping pills were useless.
Still, Roxanne might be able to manage it somehow.

“What! How dare you say that!”
“Sabo is probably considerably strong. He is quite famous among the wolf tribes. I can’t put Master at risk. If anything should happen…”
“It’s alright Roxanne. Your Master is not that weak.”
“Ah, yes.”

Roxanne tries to convince me, but I ignore it.
I don’t want to lose Roxanne.
I can’t take the risk.

He killed that woman.
If there is a chance for him to win, Sabo will not hesitate to kill Roxanne.
I can win, but it isn’t certain.

“The other party appears to be strong. I won’t be able to go easy on him. Even if he is killed there won’t be a problem?”
“Yes.”
“It’s alright.”

Sherry and Roxanne gave their approval.
There isn’t any problem?

“You accept the duel?”
“Is there a problem if I fight myself?”
“The side who received the duel request can pick a person to represent them. Their representative cannot be denied no matter who it is.”

I speak with Gozer after he came over.

“I will have to kill him, because I can’t afford to take it easy.”
“That’s always an expected outcome in a duel.”
“As I said, no matter how strong you are, I won’t lose.”

Sabo shouted.

“I don’t need a representative. After fighting the assistant instructor, it’s time for the master of the dojo to step forward.”

“I don’t understand your reason.”
“I don’t want to risk Roxanne. If you don’t want to die you will stop now.”
“I don’t need your bullshit.”

I gave you a chance to stop, and you won’t stop?
This is not just a threat.

“It’s best not to anger me.”
“That’s my line!”
“I didn’t sleep much last night, but I’m in my usual condition today. I don’t even need sleep to fight you.”
“Let’s hurry up and start.”

It’s no use.

“Then, if there are no objections, shall we begin?”
“Oo!”

Sabo yells, and I nod.
I don’t pull out Durandal.
I’m not sure if I can win by fighting head on.
I should plan an alternative.

I can use [Overwhelming], and medicine to replenish myself.
The opponent might try to use the suicide ball, and might use items.
I can use the [MP Full Release].
I can win.

“Both of you, come forward.”

Gozer begins the duel.
Sabo charges in.
Is discussion useless?
I use [Lv99 death], and indicate Sabo as the target.

There is no visible change.
Sabo is still approaching.

[Analyze] no longer shows sacrificial misanga in his equipment.
[Lv99 death] seems to have been effective.

I charge forward and use [Lv99 death] again.
Sabo swings his sword down.
I use [Overwhelming].
Everything becomes slow motion.

[Overwhelming] isn't used for fast movement.
I use it to avoid the sword.
My movements are good.

I grab Sabo's arm, which has already lost it's power.
I pull his arm while being careful not to touch the sword.
I move my leg.
I was able to move his center of gravity without much effort.

The effect of [Overwhelming] ends.
Sabo is on the ground.

"Um…"
"It only just began."

Roxanne and Sherry call out to me as I came back straight away.
Even Roxanne doesn't seem to be able to work out what happened.

"It's over."
"It was amazing. I saw you move your feet and grab his arm, but I don't understand what you did."

She saw everything.
I didn't really do anything.
Still, Roxanne seems to have seen everything.

"Defeating him with such swiftness, without even drawing your sword…"
"Wow, desu."

Sherry and Miria give praise.

“He is most certainly dead.”

Gozer confirmed Sabo’s status.
Gozer probably doesn’t understand what happened either.
[Lv99 Death] seems to be an incantation that gives death to someone if they are Lv99.
At least they don’t explode like [MP Full Release].

“I heard that Sabo is extraordinarily strong. Nobody from the Baradam house will be able to act up now. To defeat him so easily. As expected of Master.”
“Well, I wonder. Roxanne might be stronger.”

I wasn’t able to understand how strong Sabo was after all.
It could be said that I didn’t really need to understand it.

“But… Sabo was…”
“That woman who fought against the young lady was certainly strong, but for someone to exceed Sabo…”

Sabo’s party members are surprised as well.
The remaining party members are now four people.

“I, Gozer of the Harz duchy’s order of knights, testify that this was a fair duel. There may be no retaliation for this outcome.”

Gozer instructs Sabo’s party members.
Should I say something?
The follow up is important.
I don’t want to worry about them coming for revenge.

“The circumstances were unavoidable because it was a duel. Please don’t hold a grudge against me.”
“Ah, yes, I understand. I don’t intend to cause a dispute with someone who

defeated Sabo. But, the equipment."
"The equipment?"

I thought there might be problems, but there won't be a grudge?
Leaving them the equipment is better than causing them to want revenge.

"The equipment of someone defeated belongs to the winner. However, they don't often take it. Some people challenge others to duels to get equipment, especially if there are strong emotions from having equipment taken from you."

Sherry tells me.

The equipment belongs to the winner.
Therefore there are people who duel to get equipment.
To show that I am not like that, I should leave the equipment.
It seems a little confusing.

"Roxanne, what do you think?"
"I don't really have a grudge."
"We don't need the equipment."

I informed the other party members after hearing Roxanne's answer.
Though Sabo had equipment with skills, this is for the best.
There might be retaliation if I take the equipment.

"Thank you… we'll take the equipment and intelligence card home, we leave disposal of the remains to you."
"I understand."
"Thank you very much."

The party members thanked me, and spoke to Gozer.
The remains are unnecessary?
Thinking about it, not even bones are left when you die in the labyrinth either.
It's common thought to just let it fade away.

But, they are taking the intelligence card with them.
It's better proof than a lock of hair to show that someone has died.

I thought about being appointed village chief Lv1 by a knight so I could check the hand, but I don't need to do it.
Maybe when they check the intelligence card they can see what happened in their mind.
Maybe show the fight, but I don't think that's possible.

"Ok, this way."

Gozer leads us.
The leftover work is for the order of knights, and we are led into the castle.

"Master, I'm sorry."

Roxanne apologizes when we arrive in the lobby.

"It's alright. It's my fault for wanting the draw."
"But…"
"It's fine."
"Ok."

Maybe Roxanne is just as shocked as I am today.
It's not something we should worry about.

"I was quite surprised Michio. What did you do to the opponent? Even I don't understand it. The opponents sacrificial misanga was cut, so there must have been at least two attacks. I didn't think you were just an average adventurer, but that was quite something."

Gozer is amazed.
Not an average adventurer, I'm not even an adventurer.
I seem to be admired?

"He was a formidable opponent. If I had done any less it might have become dangerous."

“That woman, Roxanne, also made a show of overwhelming ability. Before the other party comes out, please leave early for today. I was here by chance, but the duke is away today. We will have a detailed discussion about this next time.”

I’m not looking forward to next time.
There’s no way out of it.
For now, I go home.

“Roxanne, are you alright?”

As soon as we arrived at the house, I spoke to Roxanne.
Roxanne is probably in the most shock.

“Yes. I’m alright. Um, what that woman said, don’t worry about it.”
“About the weak man? I’m not worried about that.”

Things like that happen.

“That. Well. About me leading a man around by the nose.”
“I don’t mind.”

I say so, and smile.
It’s a false accusation, though it might be true that the eyes of men looking at Roxanne change.

Roxanne also smiles.
I watch her face.
Are you alright?

That night after going to bed, I heard Roxanne.

“I’ve probably caused trouble for my aunt’s family.”

As the four of us lay there, Roxanne mutters.
Roxanne was a burden for her aunt’s house.
That woman prevented income from going to the aunts house.

Are you worried after all?
It's not something you should worry about.

"Forget about today."
"When my uncle approved of me becoming a slave, he added a condition with the slave trader that I could not be sold to members of the wolf tribe. Even though he was a mean uncle, that was to protect me I think."

If that woman was annoyed with Roxanne to the end, she probably would have bought Roxanne after she became a slave.
Though the uncle reluctantly sold Roxanne, he took strategic precautions.
This may have been the circumstance that Alan the slave trader mentioned.
If there is a condition for not selling to the wolf tribe, you can't sell her at an auction where anyone might buy her.

"If I think about it, I should express my gratitude to that woman. Without her it wouldn't have been possible for me to buy Roxanne, so my thanks to her. So don't worry about things too much."
"Yes. Thank you."
"You and I just have to be happy. It's the best revenge against that woman."

That's a proverb from somewhere in Spain.
Living happily is the best revenge.

I lightly embrace Roxanne with one arm, and draw her close.
Roxanne silently lays her head on me.
Her head is on my shoulder.
While feeling the weight, I fell asleep.

Chapter 106 - Waste

Next evening. When we return home, there was a note left by Luke the broker.
It should be a good news.
I hope it's not a bad news.

It can't be a summon from the Duke for the message arrived today.
It should be from yesterday, not today.

Had the message arrived tomorrow, it would have been highly likely for it to be the Duke's.
Even more so had it arrived the day after tomorrow.
Within four to five days, the Duke will surely send a summon.
Even if it's today, there's no problem.

It was a good idea to return home before going for shopping.
Is this what you call premonition?
Nope. It's not premonition, it's desire.

Not facing the problem is not the solution to the problem.
Even if ten days will have passed after the duel, the Duke will investigate if he finds even a minor detail that appears suspicious.
It will be really funny if that comes to pass.

Oh well, the business in ten days' time can be take care of in ten days' time. I should first take care of today's business.
Luke contacts me mostly in case of successful bid.

The Duke's message will take long to reach Luke.
And then Luke's message will take a few days to reach me.
Even If it's the Duke's message, I'll just visit Luke first.
I'll hear the story from Luke before visiting the Duke.
All of this will take around ten days.

"Master, there seemed to be a successful bid for Caterpillar Monster Card."

Roxanne reads Luke's message out.
I'm unusually cautious today but Roxanne seems to be her usual self.
Let alone today, even if I received such a shock yesterday, I wouldn't be this calm.

As usual, she dodged attacks from monsters with little movement.
There's a possibility that she's not as calm inside as she appears outside.
This possibility is frightening, so I won't think much about it.

"It's still bright outside, so I can make it there in time. I'll head to the merchants guild.
"Very well. Miria and I will do maintenance of the equipment then. There are enough vegetables to make soup. As for dinner, can you please take Sherry with you to buy ingredients?"
"That's fine with me."
"Whole fish, desu!"

Like Miria said, tonight's dinner will be whole fish tatsuta-age.
I have already left the whole fish to marinate in fish sauce.

I jump to the merchants guild with Sherry.
I buy the Caterpillar Monster Card.
There was no message from the Duke after all.
Alright!

"Let's make one more dish for dinner? Miria will eat most of the fish by herself."
"That's right. Then I'll stir-fry something."

After buying bread and ingredients for stir-fried food, we head back home.
I hand the Caterpillar Monster Card and a misanga with an empty skill slot to Sherry.
Sherry fuses the card casually.

"Amazing. It's at your fingertips now. As you would expect from Sherry."
"As expected of Sherry."
"Wow, desu."
"This will be for Miria."

I pat Miria who was admiring Sherry.
I play with her cat ears.
With Sherry having successfully fused the Caterpillar Monster Card, we now have four Sacrificial Misanga.
All the members of our party have a Sacrificial Misanga now.

“Okay, desu.”
“Alright then, Miria, where do you want to wear it? Ankle?”
“Thank you, desu.”

I have Miria sit on a chair.
I wrap the misanga around her foot and tie it.
I haven’t withdrawn the instruction to Luke of buying Caterpillar Monster Cards.
We will have more members in our party. Also, we need spare ones in case existing ones break.

Later, I fry the whole fish.
It can no longer be called whole fish, however, since it has been sliced into several pieces.
While I was frying the fish, Miria was beside me the whole time.
She stepped back only when oil splashed.

“Oil may splash again.”
“Splash, desu.”
“I think we need an apron.”

Apron exists in this world.
However, it’s for the purpose of safety at work. It barely qualifies as an apron. It’s not true to the essence of the word ‘apron’.
Its fabric is thick, safety being the reason.
I can put it on myself but I can’t stand Roxanne and other girls wearing it.

I want Roxanne to wear a pretty apron.
That’s right. It’s a dream of every man.
A dream of every man.
Because it was an important thing, I said it twice.

“Apron? I think it would be better to have one.”
“It’s just that there are no pretty aprons.”
“That’s right.”

Roxanne seems to agree with me.
I want fashionable aprons for them.
There is a frilled apron attached to the maid outfit but it can’t be detached.
Even though you’re only a step away, you hit a wall; it’s the same feeling.

Well, they’re not full-time housewives, so it can’t be helped.
In this world, those who wear pretty clothes don’t cook.
And those who cook can’t afford to wear pretty clothes.
Considering this, it is highly unlikely for pretty aprons to be sold.

“Then let’s visit the clothing store in the Imperial Capital and have it tailored.”
“Umm… are you sure?”
“I want Roxanne to wear pretty clothes.”
“Okay, thank you very much.”

For now, I fry the whole fish without apron.
When the dark tatsuta-age was ready, I put it in the dish.

“Alright, let’s start eating.”
“Yes, desu!”

When I bring the dish to the table and sit down on a chair, Miria leans forward.
Miria watches me closely as I put the first piece of the whole fish into my mouth.

Under the crispy layer of slime starch is the juicy whole fish.
When my teeth bite through the crispy texture into the soft meat, I feel a burst of heat.
The spicy taste of fish sauce spreads around my mouth.
It melts on my tongue.

Delicious!
It is more delicious than I imagined.

I give it three-stars.
Because it's near perfection.

"Delicious."
"Every food which Master makes is great but this one is the best."
"This is amazing."
"Delicious, fish, not eat, desu."

Does she mean that she has never eaten such a delicious fish?
Miria seems to be pleased.

Tatsuta-age vanishes quickly.
Not just Miria, even Roxanne and Sherry hold their platters out for more.
But when only a little was left, they hold themselves back.

Miria, however, is still at it.
When only one piece was left, I reach out for the dish.
Can I please eat it?

"Miria can have it."
"Okay, desu!"

When I decline it, Miria gleefully stuffs the last piece of tatsuta-age into her mouth.
She moves her jaws slowly.
When she was finished eating, she droops her shoulders.

Ah, I understand how she feels.
Well, it was just that delicious.

"We will have next celebration when we break through Haruba's 15th floor."
"Eat, desu!"

When I announce that, her eyes brighten up.
With this, she will show enthusiasm in the labyrinth.

Next day. We visit the clothing store in the Imperial Capital.
It's a shop that sells gorgeous outfits for women.
But there are no aprons being sold.

Apron doesn't seem to be an item which can be put on display in such a shop.

"I need an apron, preferably made of thin fabric, which can be put on while cooking."
"Apron?"
"It should cover only the front. It should have a strap as well, so it can be tied around the back. It should also have frills like the apron in imperial maid outfit."
"Oh"

I ask the same male attendant from earlier whom I asked about maid outfit for Miria.
He should understand what type of apron I'm talking about.
Still, the splendor of apron is unimaginable even if you know about maid outfits.
You need to be a connoisseur.

"Is it possible?"
"Which fabric would you like? If you want thin fabric, silk would be better if you ask me."
"It will get stained a lot. I need a fabric that can be easily washed."

Silk apron, huh?
I don't think it would be better, however.

"Because we will have to design it from the scratch, additional cost will be charged. It will not be much more than the cost of fabric, though. Apron made of ordinary fabric will cost you 1,000 Nars while the one made of silk will cost you 1,300 Nars."
"Hmm… so there's such a thing."

It's quite high.
Is that so because I'm commissioning a custom order?
It goes even higher if I choose silk.

"Which color would you like? We can arrange for a color that matches the sheen of silk."
"White will be fine."

He's persistent.

"White would be great, indeed. White would look great with the sheen of silk."

Color and fabric are secondary to me.

"It would?"
"Just imagine. Body wrapped from chest to knees in smooth silk. Silk that is soft to touch and glossy in appearance. We promise you the best possible article."

S-Stupid.
Does he think that I don't know?

I know how a silk apron looks and feels like.

Such a thing as silk apron.
It's expensive but I place the order.

"Can you please make both an ordinary one and a silk one for the three of them?"
"Certainly. May I have the measurements then?"
"Thank you very much."

Roxanne thanks me and then goes ahead with a female attendant.

"Shoulder straps shall be decorated with frills. Hem shall be decorated with lace. If there is anything else, please specify. It will be ready in five days."

This man knows it after all.
I have been beaten squarely.

I pay 30% discounted sum of 4,830 Nars.
It's quite an expense.
Although it's not a sum that is painful to pay,
I want to save as much money as I can for upcoming auction.

Next day. Another situation arises that requires me to part with money.
When we drop by the weapons shop, a lot of weapons were lined up in the inner part of the shop.
The inner part of the shop exhibits high-tier equipment.

There were not many equipment exhibited in the inner part of the shop till today.

“There seemed to be a large shipment.”
“Yes, we received a lot of equipment from a certain family.”

Wholesale, huh?
If you sell in bulk, you can receive a large sum immediately.
I’m envious.

“There are many estocs. Do you want to have a look?”
“Sure. Thank you.”

Estoc | One-handed Sword
Skills | Empty | Empty | Empty | Empty

Hmm…
I find an estoc with four empty skill slots.
I was able to find such an estoc because there was a bulk of it.
Rapier can have a maximum of three empty skill slots. Four seems to be the limit for estoc.

“What do you say, Roxanne?”
“Umm… are you sure?”
“Have a look.”
“O-Okay.”

I hand the estoc to Roxanne.

The number of empty skill slots is same as two-handed counterpart, Damascus steel sword. Is the performance on the same level, too?
To replace Durandal, I need [Incantation Interruption] at minimum along with [HP Absorption] and [MP Absorption].

There are a few Damascus steel spears but they don’t have any empty skill slot on them.
I look at Sherry and shake my head.

“Okay.”

Replies Sherry.
She seems to have understood the underlying meaning.

There are a few staves as well. They seem to have empty skill slots.
Among those with empty skill slots, there's an exquisite piece of equipment.
Furthermore, it's a Staff of Offerings with [2x Increase in Intelligence] skill.
It's an upgrade to my current equipment.

Staff of Offerings is the weapon which Cassia uses.
Same weapon as Cassia, huh?
That's a must.

"It seems to be a good weapon."

Roxanne passes the estoc back to me.
I purchase the staff and the estoc.
Gold coins fly away like birds with newly grown wings.
It's painful to see.

After we were done at the weapons shop, we head to the armor shop.
There was nothing new at the armor shop.
Did they sell only weapons?

"Did they not sell any armor?"
"So you have heard already. You have good ears."

The armor merchant overhears me muttering to myself.
He sidles up to me while rubbing his hands.
So they sold armors after all.

"Kinda."
"I have indeed received some stock. I haven't put it on display yet. It's in the back of the shop. Do you want to check it out?"
"Can I?"
"Yes. Here, please."

The armor merchant leads me to the back of the shop. (TN: Never go to the back of a shop with a stranger.)
I enter the inner part of the shop from behind the counter.
There were many equipment lined up.

"There's quite a number of equipment."
"I purchased these equipment just today."
"Were the equipment sold by a certain family?"

“Apparently. It’s impossible to get a hold of a bulk of such good equipment otherwise. The family was quite influential but it seems to have met its end. They were gaining influence through force but the reckless use of force proved to be their undoing. The strongest man of the family seems to have died. There’s a rumor that he was killed in a duel.”

Duel?
I think I have heard this story somewhere.

“Killed?”
“Now that they are no longer strong, they are paying for their domineering attitude. They seemed to have raised a lot of funds through debts but they never repaid those debts and kept pushing the date of repayment forcibly. The debts have now grown enormous.”

That’s harsh.
So it was their attitude in general.
I thought their attitude toward Roxanne stemmed from their enmity toward her.

Well, I must thank Baradam family for these equipment, at least.
There’s a Damascus steel forehead protector with four empty skill slots and a dragon leather jacket with three empty skill slots.

“This is?”
“It’s alba.”
“This piece of clothing increases magic power and greatly increases magic defense. It’s an equipment for priests, monks and wizards.”

Alba seems to be a body equipment. This one has two empty skill slots.
It’s my first time seeing this equipment.
The armor merchant told me the name of the equipment while Sherry explained the rest.

“It’s made of holy silver. Because making it requires expansive use of holy silver, it is considered high-tier equipment and is rarely available in market. Equipment such as loafers are focused on fashion but this one is focused on performance. Because magic defense is great to have against monsters that use magic attacks, even those who don’t have magic-based jobs use this equipment.”

The armor merchant is trying to sell its features.
Increase in magic power is indeed attractive.
There are empty skill slots as well.

Also, there are dragon leather shoes and dragon leather gloves with one empty skill slot.
One empty skill slot is not much but I decide to buy them in the end.
It's a rare opportunity.
Once I have monster cards fused with them, they'll be even better.

Therefore, it's not a waste.
It's an investment.
Even though tens of gold coins have vanished just like that.

Chapter 107 - Raising Funds

(TN: Not to be confused with 'Fundraising')

Currently, I have one green magic crystal and one yellow magic crystal at hand.
The green magic crystal is the one I have been working on.
Because I have been accumulating magic in this crystal for a long time now, it will likely turn yellow by the auction.

The yellow magic crystal is the result of merging the magic crystals we obtained from Heinz's gang.
I have no idea as to how much magic has been accumulated in this crystal because it belonged to the thieves.
It may contain magic equivalent to 200,000 monsters or it may contain magic equivalent to 900,000 monsters.
If I can accumulate magic in this crystal equivalent to 1,000,000 monsters, it will turn into white magic crystal which can be sold for a million Nars.
Whether I can do that before the auction or not, there's no knowing. It's a gamble.

A guaranteed 100,000 Nars or a probable 1,000,000 Nars?
For now, I enter the enter the labyrinth with yellow magic crystal and start accumulating magic.
Should I change it?
Green magic crystal can easily be turned yellow before the auction and sold for 100,000 Nars but I'm not sure if I can turn yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal and earn a million Nars before the auction.

Not necessarily. I can merge the magic crystals into one.
If the yellow magic crystal doesn't turn white by the auction, I can merge the crystals into one.
If I had just merged all the crystals into one and worked on yellow magic crystal, it would have turned white by now.

There are still some days left till the auction.
I can definitely earn more money.
If I can't turn the yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal before the auction, I can just sell the green magic crystal turned yellow for 100,000 Nars. If I feel the need for 1,000,000 Nars, I can merge the crystals into one and then aim for white crystal.
There's another option. Selling two yellow crystals for 200,000 Nars, that is.

The more the options, the better.
Which means working on green magic crystal is wise.
After the green magic crystal turns yellow, I should leave it as is.
If the yellow magic crystal doesn't turn white before the auction, I can either sell it for 100,000 Nars or I can work exclusively on it. It's better to work on it exclusively rather than selling it.

There's one more problem and that's skill.
Currently, I have my bonus points invested in experience based skills.
As a result, I had to neglect [Crystallization].
If I intend to earn more money before the auction by selling magic crystals, I have to invest bonus points in [Crystallization].

Auction is held four times a year.
If there's a chance, I have to grab it.
And to do that, I have to make sure that I'm fully prepared.
I want to become an adventurer as quickly as possible but the situation demands otherwise.

The policy has been decided.
I replace [Increase in Gained Experience] with [Crystallization 64x].
I equip alba and challenge Haruba's 15th floor.

If earning money is the objective, there's one more option. And that is to farm whole fish on Bode's 12th floor.
But there's no need to go to that extent.
On 16th floor, the maximum number of monsters in a group will increase to five. To accumulate magic quickly in the magic crystals; the higher the floor, the better.

One monster will give me magic equivalent to 64 monsters.

Kaga Michio | Male | 17 years old
Explorer Lv42 | Hero Lv38 | Wizard Lv41 | Monk Lv41
Equipment | Rod of Offerings | Hard Leather Hat | Alba | Dragon Leather Gloves | Dragon Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | Female | 16 years old
Warrior Lv26
Equipment | Estoc | Steel Shield | Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Dragon Leather Jacket | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes of Willow | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | Female | 16 years old
Master Smith Lv32
Equipment | Steel Spear of Power | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail | Water Resistant Leather Mittens | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Miria | Female | 15 years old
Diver Lv31
Equipment | Rapier | Iron Shield | Strengthened Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Alba is a knee-length outfit.
An outfit that you can see a father in a church wearing.
And it's white. It looks like I'm wearing an apron.

I try to fight with the alba equipped.
I finish Sarracenia in three [Fire Ball]s after having taken out Bitch Butterflies in five [Breeze Storm]s.
Because the number of attacks required has decreased, it has been ascertained that alba increases magic power.
It doesn't make it easy but it does make it easier.

Only an upgrade alone doesn't reduce the duration of battle.
I must be grateful that an equipment which is not even a weapon was able to, albeit little, increase my magic power.

"I look totally like a wizard now."
"That's right. I will have to be more careful with guiding to the monsters."
"Isn't it useless to use rod now?"

You don't see many adventurers and explorers wearing an alba.
I should better be careful.
I will have to depend on Roxanne more than ever.

"Priests and monks wear it, too."

Like Sherry said, I can deceive people as a priest or a monk.
As long as I don't encounter Gozer or other members of the order of knights, there will be no problem.
I should better not head outside of the labyrinth with the alba equipped.

Alba is light and can be tied around the waist with a strap. It doesn't hinder movement.
Even if I use Durandal with the alba equipped, there will be no sense of incongruity.

"Although a monk using a sword looks odd, a monk fighting as a vanguard is fine, right?"
"Yes. Because the more the firepower in attack, the better."

Roxanne confirms.
That party size is restricted to six, it is not a good idea to reserve a place for healer.
Even a monk can go berserk with a sword, no?

I try staff, too. As expected, the effect of [2x Increase in Intelligence] skill isn't much different from my Rod of Offerings.

We shortly reach the boss room of Haruba's 15th floor.
Because the duration of battle has shortened?
Or because of Miria's enthusiasm?

"So, what kind of monster is Bitch Butterfly boss?"
"Madame Butterfly. It's basically stronger version of Bitch Butterfly. The chance of paralysis is higher, so we need to be cautious."

Sherry briefs while we enter the boss room.
Because we never broke through 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth, this is our first time fighting against Bitch Butterfly boss.

"xxxxxxxxxx"

Roxanne translates it to Miria.
Teaching her one word at a time is taking long.
Miria has to get familiar with Brahim quickly.

When we enter the boss room, two monsters appear.
A Bitch Butterfly and a Madame Butterfly.
Madame Butterfly has a large eye pattern on its wings.
It looks more like a moth than a butterfly.

There is not much hair on its body.
However, there's long hair growing around the eye pattern. It looks like eyelashes.
The eyelashes are fascinating. Just like a 'madame'.

Also, there's distinct bluish-black eye-line.
Truly a 'madame'.
As far as the eye pattern is concerned, it looks really like a 'madame'.

Because it's a monster, however, it must be pushed down.
I take the accompanying Bitch Butterfly out swiftly and join the attack on the Madame Butterfly.
I attack it cautiously.
I will get paralyzed if I receive Madame Butterfly's attack.

Well, there's no way for Roxanne to make such a blunder.
I carefully connect it with Durandal from behind.

Oops

Madame Butterfly swings its large wing.
Its wing covers the entire area.
I lower my head to dodge it.
Because I was careful, I was able to dodge it.

Miria seems to be fine, too.
There's no need to be worried about Roxanne.
Sherry nudges with her spear from a distance, so she should be fine as well.
Everyone seems to be safe.

We switch back to attack.
Our group of four takes the monster out.

Madame Butterfly drops down.
It turns into smoke and dissipates.

“Magic crystal, desu!”

Miria cries excitedly.
Is there really a magic crystal?
I can’t see it but [Appraisal] shows a magic crystal. Miria runs to the magic crystal.

Miria grabs the magic crystal, not the dropped item, and brings it over to me.
It’s a black magic crystal.
How did she notice something that appeared out of nowhere?

“As expected of Miria. Well done.”
“Yes, desu.”

I lightly pat Miria’s head.
It’s unfortunate that I can’t play with her cat ears because she has a hat on.

“Which reminds me, we previously found a magic crystal in a boss room. Are magic crystals easily found in boss rooms?”
“In a boss room, the position where a boss appears is fixed. Also, boss monsters possess more magic.”

Sherry explains.
Respawn point is fixed, indeed.
Because respawn point is fixed, the place where the boss collapses is nearby. It helps the magic to build up at the same point.

The magic of boss monsters is more, huh?
I was of the idea that the rate at which the magic accumulates in a magic crystal is same for every monster but it doesn’t seem to be the case.
Should I undertake another experiment?

“Can we fight against this boss once more?”

After arriving at 16th floor, we retreat back to 15th floor.
When I checked my backpack, the green magic crystal had turned yellow.

This green magic crystal turned yellow in just one day.
As expected, the effect of [Crystallization 64x] is considerable.

Or perhaps it had already accumulated enough magic until now?
With [Crystallization 64x], I will have to kill just 157 monsters to accumulate magic equivalent to 10,000 monsters.
At this rate, white magic crystal doesn't seem to be a far cry.

"It's yellow already. As expected of Master."
"Thank you."

I put the black magic crystal, which Miria found, in my backpack and put the yellow magic cystal in my Item Box.
I put the newly formed yellow magic crystal carefully in the innermost part of the Item Box.
I have two yellow magic crystals. They may appear same but they are completely different.
I don't want to make a goofy mistake of forgetting which one is which.

I reduce [Crystallization] to 32x and defeat the boss again.
As to why I didn't keep it at 64x that's because there are two monsters to take out in the boss room.
After I take the accompanying Sarracenia out, we finish the Madame Butterfly.

I drop my backpack and check the magic crystal inside.
The crystal had turned purple from red.

"Purple magic crystal already? It's absurd as always."

Sherry is surprised.

"Like Sherry said, the boss seems to possess more magic."
"I did say that defeating one boss is equivalent to defeating many monsters but to get a purple magic crystal by defeating just one boss…"
"It's to be expected of Master."
"Amazing, desu."
"Well, this much is nothing."

I grab the straw provided to me by Roxanne.
Although I defeated two monsters with [Crystallization 32x], it accumulated

magic equivalent to 100 monsters.
It means a boss possesses over twice the magic of a normal monster.

If we assume that Madame Butterfly possessed twice the magic of Sarracenia, then it should have accumulated magic equivalent to 96 monsters with [Crystallization 32x].
However, if magic of 4 monsters was already accumulated in the black magic crystal, which Miria found, then it's possible for it to turn purple with magic of 96 monsters.

Further investigation will be bothersome.
I can do it but not now.
As to how much magic Madame Butterfly possesses compared to normal monsters, it can be accurately calculated.
If magic equivalent to 100 monsters can be accumulated, I can keep on killing boss monsters until the magic crystal turns white.

Wait a minute. When you kill 100 monsters, does the crystal turn blue or purple?
There is no such level as 30 monsters or more.
Even if there is, I won't bother testing it.
In any case, turning the yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal before the auction seems to be possible with [Crystallization 64x].

"Haa…"
"So, which monster appears on Haruba's 16th floor?"
"Ah, umm… the monster native to Haruba's 16th floor is Clamshell. It does not use poison attack but its attack may inflict paralysis. It also splashes water as long-range attack. It's not water magic, however. It's considered physical attack. It also has digestive property. It's resistant to fire magic. Earth magic is its weakness."

Sherry briefs with dissenting expression.

"Shell powder, was it?"
"Correct."

The item dropped by Clamshell is shell powder.
I won't have to buy it from now on.

“They are resistant to fire magic like Bitch Butterflies. This is 16th floor, however, so we have to avoid Sarracenias. Roxanne, search for places with few monsters.”
“Understood.”

I ask of Roxanne to guide us.
Fire magic is the weakness of Sarracenias while Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells are resistant to fire magic.
If there are more Sarracenias, we will have to finish them first but that will make things difficult.
Because Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells are resistant to fire magic, the overall battle will be longer.

Onward from 16th floor, the maximum number of monsters in a group is five.
Ideally, there should be no more than two Sarracenias in a group.
Roxanne can take on one of them. Because there will be one more, there’s a chance of receiving attack.
But the duration of battle will be shorter.

However, Sarracenia is native to 14th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth. Because there’s a difference of two floors, there shouldn’t be too many Sarracenias here.
Even if there are Sarracenias in a group, they should be in minority.
We shouldn’t face much trouble.

“Umm… Pig Hogs are resistant to earth magic.”

Sherry points out.
They are?
We encounter a group of three Clamshells and two Pig Hogs.

It’s my job to consider various combinations and appropriate magic.
Similarly, Roxanne’s job is to guide us to suitable locations.
Roxanne’s job is difficult.

Chapter 108 - Clamshell

The Clamshell is a bivalve demon. TN: bivalve is the term for something with two shells… I think.
It's about one meter in size.
It's small for a demon, but quite large for a bivalve.
If Roxanne stood on one naked, it would be a true Birth of Venus. TN: Birth of Venus is a painting by Sandro Botticelli from the 1480's.

Even though it's large, it doesn't wave.
It's quite plain.
I was expecting a large tongue.

It's not on it's side, but standing upright.
Despite being a bivalve.
It's a mystery how it stands upright without any feet.
How it moves is also a mystery.

It moves towards us while standing.
It's speed is about average.
Since earth magic is it's weakness, I use [Sand ball].
The Clamshell approaches, and Roxanne takes the front.

There is only one demon, and Sherry is to the side using her spear to pierce it.
Miria is to the other side.
I have a position between Miria and Roxanne.

The Clamshell makes a charge, and is deflected by Roxanne's shield.
Next, it's mouth opens up and it spits out water.
Roxanne tilts her upper body and avoids it.

There's also an attack like that?
It would hit me.
It's good I'm to the side a bit.

The shell moves again, and the mouth opens wide.
It jumps towards Roxanne like that.
It tries to sandwich her in it's two shells.

Roxanne pierces it with her Estoc, and then dodges it calmly.
After avoiding the shellfish, she pierces it again.
She has plenty of room.

I was scared and stayed back a little.
I was at a diagonal position in the back.

"It bites?"

Being sandwiched by a one meter bivalve.
It might be considerably powerful.

"It seems so."

Roxanne answers like it's nothing to worry about.

"Even though the library book said there was a good chance of being paralyzed if you are bitten, I think being paralyzed might be a certainty after witnessing it."
"If the movement is large, it won't be able to hit easily."

There it is.
Sherry & I share a glance.
Roxanne is ahead of everyone at being able to do these things in the heat of battle.

I use a fifth [Sand ball].
Isn't it defeated with five?
I used a sixth shot… but the Clamshell was defeated before it.

"Oh, it's defeated."
"I did it."

The bivalve falls to the floor of the cave.
Sherry's spear seems to have been the last nail in it's coffin.
It became smoke and disappeared.

“You did it, Sherry.”
“It’s amazing, desu.”
“Thank you. I think it was largely because Roxanne pierced the inside of it when it’s mouth was open, and because it’s an aquatic demon Miria’s power might have been strong as well.”

Sherry is pleased.
It’s the first time Sherry defeated a demon I tried to use magic on.
Roxanne’s weapon has changed to the estoc and our offensive ability has increased.

“Is there extra damage from attacking the inside?”

I confirmed it with Sherry.

“The hard shell didn’t show much damage after our attacks, so I think so.”
“Ah, I see.”

It seems like a good thought.
It’s not a demon I understand well.

There are various differences when Sherry defeats a demon.
If I don’t deliver the final blow, [64x crystallization] does not work.
[Increase acquired experience] is also a skill I have.
If I don’t deliver the final blow, there might be no bonus to experience.

Sometimes there’s just no helping it however.
Even if I don’t finish it, we might get the experience because my magic did most of the work.

Sherry attacked about 4-5 times.
With three people it would be about 12 times.
Sometimes it’s going to happen.
It would be crazy to demand that they don’t attack.

We take on a group next.
There are three Clamshell’s, and one Bitch Butterfly.

“It’s coming.”

Roxanne calls out.
Roxanne moves her body slightly.
Water goes past in the position her upper body was in.

It doesn't seem to be magic, but cannot be blocked by the shield.
Getting wet is also unpleasant, so evading it is better than trying to deal with it.

It's good that I'm not right behind Roxanne.
I've been seeing battles for a while.
I can foresee the danger of being behind Roxanne.
Even I am learning every day.

The Clamshells and Bitch Butterfly approach.
The Clamshells come forward after shooting water without delay.
It is neither magic or a skill that they use to shoot water.
There is no delay because they don't need to use a magic formation?

There is a three person vanguard against the four of them.
I defeated the Clamshell's with six [Sand storm]'s.
This isn't one of the times where I can defeat them all in the same number of shots.

I need to use another three [Breeze ball]'s to defeat the Bitch Butterfly.
Magic is the decisive blow this time.
Three people pick up the dropped items.
Miria passes me Shell Powder at the end.

"Here, desu"
"A clam is a bivalve, is this where the clam ingredient comes from?"
"Yes, it's an item from the Clamshell. It's a rare item, but doesn't seem to be as rare as whole fish."

Sherry tells me.
It's like that afterall?
Miria seems to want to say something.

"The clam is dinner tonight, and tomorrow's dinner will be deep fried whole fish."
"Tomorrow's dinner, desu."

I'm not sure if she's happy or upset.
She might be pleased.
She might be upset that it's not til tomorrow.
The fish needs time to marinate in the fish sauce.

"Next, please lead us to a place with three kinds of demons."
"I understand. I know the smell of a group with 3 Clamshells and 1 Bitch Butterfly, I'll do my best to find a group like that with a third demon type as well."
"Please do."

As expected, Roxanne is reliable.
There can be a maximum group of 5 demons on the 16th floor.
There are three kinds of demons, and the maximum group size is 5. With all three demons, there would only be one of the other demon type.
That's how things would turn out with this combination.

Some estimations can't be made in a two to one combination.
Like if there were two sarracenia and one other kind of demon.

"Um, I think I've found a group with 3 Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and a Pig Hog. How is that?"
"Clamshell and Pig Hog together? We should try that out."
"I understand, this way."

A group with three kinds of demons on Haruba's 16th floor. Three Clammshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and Pig Hog.
I use six earth spells on the Clamshells, after that the Bitch Butterfly falls from another three wind spells, and then the Pig Hog falls last from an additional three [Water ball]'s.
It's a considerably long fight.
It's quite serious.

"Three [Water ball]'s… We should avoid this combination as much as possible."
"Is that so?"

No matter if I use it or not, the amount of spells needed doesn't seem to change while using Monk.
I won't stop using Cook, because I want clams.

Next is a group of 3 different kinds of demons made up by 3 Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and a Sarracenia.
I use six earth spells on the Clamshells, after that the Bitch Butterfly falls from another three wind spells, and finally the Sarracenia falls from one fire spell.

“Is this combination alright?”
“Yes, there’s no problem with this one.”

For Roxanne, nothing seems like a problem.
However, prolonged combat is a serious problem.
Roxanne isn’t the only one fighting, so there are other things to consider.

I used [Meteor Crash].
If they have fire resistance, it might not defeat them. My expectations are off though, because the Clamshells are defeated with a single [Meteor Crash].
Why is that?
Does [Meteor Crash] have the earth attribute?

Earth magic is a weakness of the Ma Bream on the 12th floor.
I haven’t tested if [Meteor Crash] can defeat them in a single blow.
I’ll have to test out [Meteor Crash] a bit more.

Miria seems worried, so we finish up on Haruba’s 16th floor for now and head to Bode’s 12th floor.
We hunted until we got two whole fish.
I got them as our celebration of our passing of the 15th floor.

“Is two whole fish enough?”
“Yes, desu.”
“It’s good.”

Miria seems to think two is enough.
It might be too much.
There’s the possibility of getting tired of it quickly.
Though it might be too delicious for that.

We returned to Haruba’s 16th floor.
I’m using [Fifth job] so I can use both Cook and Monk at the same time.

Since there are up to five enemies, we should have Monk.
Even Roxanne might get hit if there are five.
It would be troublesome to switch to Monk after someone is hit, so it should be ready in case of an emergency.

I've had to sacrifice a lot of my experience gain because I still want to keep [64x crystallization].
There's no other choice.
I have to keep doing it until I have a white crystal ready for the auction.
If I get clams in large quantities, I can make a profit selling them as well.

The soup I made for dinner was clam chowder, which I hadn't had in a long time.
It is still delicious.
Roxanne, Sherry and Miria also think it is delicious to eat.

"Yes, desu."

Miria doesn't seem to have remembered the brahim word for clam yet.
Even this morning, all she said was "here" when passing the clams she had picked up.

"It's a clam. Clam."
"Clam, desu."

Even if she says it, she'll probably forget it straight away.
Should I relate it to fish?
It's a good combination to have the taste of fish and clam together.
TN: Scene change, gooo!

"I made macaroni for breakfast this morning, and I'd like some soup later."
"Okay."
"I'll make the soup."

We make our plans after leaving the labyrinth.
Sherry will make the soup.

White meat, clams, pig ribs, lots of vegetables, and macaroni
The macaroni has seafood sauce as a topping.
I bought bread as well, so there might be too many ingredients.

“It’s delicious. The clam is very delicious.”
“Yes. Master’s cooking is the best.”
“Very tasty, desu.”

Clam soup goes well with the white meat.
Miria won’t have any complaints about this.

“White meat is delicious, desu.”

Ok, I was wrong.
If there is fish involved, Miria won’t notice anything else.

“What is this?”

I try asking near the end of the day.

“Shell powder, desu.”

Since shell powder was used in the tempura, she seems to have memorized it.

“And this?”
“Clam, desu.”

Oh!
You remembered it?

“I ate it with white meat this morning.”
“That’s right.”

It seems it wasn’t useless.
Is this the best way for Miria to learn brahim?

We leave the labyrinth and head back home.
There’s a message from Luke waiting when we get back.

It’s the thing I was afraid of.
It’s quicker than I thought.
Some time has passed, and the call from the Duke has come.

“Master, he seems to have made a successful bid for a butterfly monster card.”

Roxanne reads the memo.
It seems I'm alright, even after several days.
The message is just here because of my successful bid?
Butterfly monster card.

"What skill does butterfly monster card give?"
"It adds a wind attribute to attacks if put on a weapon, and resistance to wind if put on protective equipment."
"Something like the mermaid monster card?"
"Yes."

I confirmed it with Sherry.
Mermaid monster card is the one we used to make the waterproof leather mittens.
Mermaid monster card adds the water attribute, and this adds the wind attribute.

Cassia had resistance to the four elements on her equipment.
I should make something like that.
I have 4 empty skill slots on my damascus steel forehead protector.
I could add resistance to all four elements on one piece of equipment.

"I'll use it on my damascus steel forehead protector. Does it fuse with a kobold monster card?"
"It does. It will make the effect stronger, and make the equipment useful for a long time if it's damascus steel."

Sherry is positive.
She hasn't failed in fusing anything so far.
She's finally got confidence.
It's a good trend.

"Are there only four attributes that can be added with monster cards."
"Yes, as far as I know."

The same as the wizards four attributes?

"Okay, we'll add all four to my damascus steel forehead protector."
"What?"

Sherry stops.
I thought we were going smoothly.

“There wasn’t much progress in the research for multiple skills? It should be fine, we won’t overlap any effects.”
“Um…”
“Don’t worry about it. If it doesn’t work, it doesn’t work.”
“Ah…”

It’s hard to test if it has an effect.
I was able to test plating by applying it to a demon and watching the effect.
It would be difficult to make a demon equip my damascus steel forehead protector.
I’d have to capture it, immobilize it, and equip it.

The only thing I can do is test it on myself.
Become a human experiment.
Use [Fire wall] and put my hand in it.
I don’t want to do it.

“That’s right, it would be hard to test the effects. I can understand your anxiety.”
“That’s not it. Testing the effects would be difficult, but what if it fails from adding two or more skills?”
“I trust that you’ll be fine Sherry.”
“Ohhh…”

Sherry looks at me with cold eyes, like I’m some kind of mad scientist.
Things are different for a party that doesn’t mind human experimentation for scientific progress.
A slave or thief could be bought and shot with magic to count how many until they died.
But it would be inhuman to go that far.

If we could conjure a demon, we might be able to test it.
There isn’t any other way to test it.
There probably isn’t any helping it.
I’ll have to accept it as is.

Chapter 109 - Apron

I put on the apron, which I bought from a clothing store in Quratar, and fry the whole fish.
It's called 'apron' but not a shred of 'cute' can be found. It is focused on practicality.
As long as it's I who puts it on, it's alright.

After I carry the dish to the table, we start eating.
As always, the whole fish tatsuta-age is amazing.

"It's boring to eat the same thing every time we celebrate breaking through a floor."
"…"

When Roxanne translates it, Miria looks at me with sorrowful eyes.
No tears?
I opted to start this topic when there was enough whole fish tatsuta-age in the dish.

"I-I didn't mean it like that. It is certainly delicious but it won't remain delicious if we eat it all the time."
"…Bread crumbs, desu."

After pondering over it for a while, Miria speaks.
Fish fry?
If I remember correctly, I made it back when Miria joined us.

"That, huh? Then how about whole fish fry on next celebration?"
"It will be good, I think."
"Yes, I look forward to it."

I obtain Roxanne's and Sherry's agreement.

"Eat, desu!"

Miria's eyes brighten up.
Now livened up, she bites into the tatsuta-age.
She looks really happy.

Even though we have agreed upon what to make on next celebration, Miria still droops her shoulders after eating last piece.
That's not enough to make up for this, I guess.

Next morning. After having breakfast, I head to the merchants guild alone.
I ask Roxanne to do the laundry and cleaning.
I don't want to go to Luke now but I have to.

Can't I just say that I'm far away and can't come back? No, this excuse is not valid for this world.
Because adventurers can use [Field Walk].
It's arguable whether it's a convenient ability or not.
And then there's the question of where is this place I currently am.

I jump to the waiting room of the merchants guild and call Luke.
I was praying for him to suddenly fall ill but he appears right after.
It didn't work.

"Here is the Butterfly Monster Card."

I was led to the meeting room and shown the monster card.

"Indeed. I want to fuse it simultaneously with Kobold Monster Card. Is Kobold Monster Card still not available?"
"There's nothing to buy at 4,000 Nars. If you want to buy it right now, the price can go as high as 5,000 Nars."
"Okay then, Kobold Monster Card for 5,000 Nars."

Someone appears and places a purchase order for Kobold Monster Card.
Previous price was 5,200 Nars, so it seems to have gone down.
Because there's no immediate need for [Wind Resistance], 5,000 Nars is too much.

"Understood. Lately, there are many people looking for Kobold Monster Card. Do you know why? Because of [MP Absorption]. We have received many orders for Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card. The price of Kobold Monster Card will most likely go up, so it may get difficult."

Which reminds me, Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card was quite expensive when I came here for the first time and placed the order. There has been no news ever since.
[MP Absorption] skill is acquired by simultaneously fusing Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card and Kobold Monster Card.
Did that person, who placed the order for Kobold Monster Card, intends to attach [MP Absorption] skill to their weapon?

"Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant, huh?"
"It was exhibited the other day and sold for quite high."
"But the price of Kobold Monster Card fell. Is Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card a waste?
"In the auction, many Kobold Monster Cards are exhibited but their use is restricted. Other monster cards can be used readily, so master smiths buy them immediately."

I see.
Many Kobold Monster Cards appear but not all of them are bought.
They should exhibit same number of Kobold Monster Cards as Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card.

Whether Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Cards are more or less, people will try to get their hands on them.
Therefore, if you exhibit limited cards, it will stimulate demand.

"I get it. It's not wise to go for Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant at the moment. For now, I'll just wait-and-see."

I have yet to find a Damascus steel sword with empty skill slots.
I'll first test the effect with a steel sword.

"Very well. Also, there's a summon for you from the order of Harz knights."

Kuh…
There's a summon after all.

"…Now that you mention it, have you heard any rumors about a certain family?"

I nod slightly and try to change the topic.
I believe that I didn't have an unpleasant expression about my face.

Because I had made up my mind beforehand.
So it's alright, hopefully.

"A certain family?"

It's not confirmed to be Baradam family yet.
So there's no need to mention the family's name.

"They seem to be in financial crisis, so a lot of equipment with skills are flowing into the market."
"Is there any particular equipment you're looking for?"
"I was just informing you. I have already purchased some equipment."
"Thank you and be careful."

After Luke sees me off, I leave the merchants guild.

Next morning. We return from the labyrinth as it's about time.
I always visit the Harz duchy at this time.
There's no choice but to go.

"I'll head to the Bode castle now. I ask of you three to prepare breakfast."
"Understood."
"Please be careful."
"Okay, desu."

Luke must have already told the Duke that he has conveyed the message.
Therefore, I can't afford to not go.
Also, even if I delay it, I won't be able to get away with it.

Actually, if I delay it, the Duke's memory may fade.
So then, should I go tomorrow?
Or the day after tomorrow?

"Are you not going?"

Sherry asks the indecisive me.

"I'm just preparing myself."
"Is that so?"

Somehow, her voice felt cold.
No, her eyes. Her eyes felt cold.
Sherry understands my predicament.

Damn it!
Because I have to go, I said that I'm going.
Now that I have said I'm going, I can't but go.
I [Warp] through the wall of the living room.

"Are the Duke and Gozer-dono there?"
"They're inside, I think."

I jump to the lobby of the Bode castle.
When I inquire a member of the order of knights, I receive a hopeless answer.
Well, I didn't expect them to not be here in the first place.

The knight makes way for me to enter.
They don't seem to be wary enough of a stranger.

It's because of the Duke, I guess.
Since the Duke has permitted me to enter.
Well, it's better than the tradition of not allowing an adventurer to enter the throne room.

I halt in front of the working room.
I take a deep breath in.
I make up my mind and knock.

"Enter."
"Michio here."

Comes Gozer's voice upon which I enter.
The Duke is sitting on the chair while Gozer is standing in front of the desk, fiddling with some papers.

"Oh, Michio-dono? I heard from Gozer about the affair from the other day. Great victory it was."
"Not at all."

Right off the bat, eh?

“To win without even using a sword — incredible.”
“Wha-”
“As expected of the person I rate highly. Even gozer couldn’t see your movement.”
“Yes. Although I know you did something, I have no idea what you did.”

Because Gozer isn’t Lv99, I can’t show it to him.
But I can’t say that.

“Oh well, why don’t you show it to Gozer?”
“Wha-”

Such pressure.

“I have heard about your opponent, too. Sabo Baradam is quite an expert. Although people’s opinion of him as a person isn’t exactly good, he’s a force to be reckoned with when it comes to ability.”
“Wha-”
“But you took him out just like that. You should be proud.”
“Wha-”

I can’t but withstand this.

“But I want to hear as to exactly how you defeated him. Well, it shouldn’t be a secret, right?”
“I’m sorry.”

Because I was being patient, the Duke tries to take advantage.
It’s time to put my foot down.

My assassination art is a secret, hereditary art.
No one but the chosen one can know about it.

“Like I thought. Oh well, it can’t be helped then. Only a fool would show his cards.”
“It’s a matter of course for top explorers and adventurers.”

Gozer joins in for some reason.
I’m glad.
In this world, revealing your techniques is considered foolish, it seems.
If others copy it, you’ll become weaker.

What your techniques are, only you should know.
Even when you impart it, you impart it to your children or a selected few disciples.
It's common sense in this world.

"I also heard that the woman who fought before Michio-dono was tremendously strong. Did you teach her your techniques?
"Of course. That she was able to fight like that, it's only natural for her to have learned Michio-dono's arts."

So Roxanne is strong even in Gozer's eyes, huh?

"Not at all."
"Now that you mention it, her fighting style was to keep the opponent close."
"I see. So it was like that."

'You learn, without realizing it, from what is around you.'
However, it's different.

"She is special."
"Hou~"

The Duke becomes interested.
No!
Not Roxanne!

Absolutely not!
It's impossible!
Even if you offer Cassia in exchange… it's impossible!
Not Sherry, too. Miria, neither.

The Duke grins.
I glare at him.
I don't want this topic to go on any further.

"Err… Michio-dono, the Palmasque mirrors, which we purchased from you, we have gifted to two influential figures of the territory. Their opinion of the mirrors was quite favorable."

Reading the mood between the Duke and me, Gozer tries to change the topic.
As expected of Gozer.
The man of the world. (TN: Someone who is highly experienced/wise.)
He must be struggling under the Duke.

“That’s great.”
“And we have already decided to gift one more mirror to someone.”
“Someone?”
“That’s right.”

Gozer nods and the Duke confirms.
They don’t tell me who that someone is, though.
Well, it’s not like I particularly want to know.

“We would like to keep using Palmasque mirrors, decorated with frames made in Talem, as gifts. Therefore, we would like to replenish three mirrors which we have already dispensed. Can you please do it?”

So the reason I was called for was Palmasque mirrors?

“Thank you for your patronage.”

I accept the order.
I need money for the auction.
There’s no reason to decline.

“There’s no rush, though. You can bring one mirror at a time like you did previously. Also, we won’t mind two or three mirrors in excess.”

They didn’t pursue the matter of the duel any further and placed the order.
That’s already good enough for me.
‘The fear of danger is more than the danger itself.’
This is such a world.
I return home in pleasant mood.

I didn’t go to the amber merchant, nor Palmasque. I went straight to the Imperial Capital.
It was the day agreed with the clothing store in the Imperial Capital.
I went there a little before the evening.
I received the aprons and returned.

“It looks great. Thank you very much.”
“It’s very well made.”
“Lovely, desu.”

When I arrive at home, the three of them receive their aprons.
They frolickly check their aprons out.
They seem to like the aprons.

The apron tailored by the clothing store of the Imperial Capital is generously frilled. It looks lovely.
The hem of the silk apron is delicately laced.
Also, although there’s no lace in the apron made of ordinary fabric, it looks pretty nonetheless.

“Wear this while cooking. The food will be even tastier.”
“But it will be bad if it gets stained. It’s silk after all.”
“Silk apron is not for use in the kitchen.”

I answer the rational Sherry’s concern.

“Then where do I use it?
“Silk apron is for use in the bedroom. It’s a tradition there where I came from. You wear an apron when you cook. Therefore, in the bedroom, you will wear nothing but the apron and serve me the ‘food’. I want all three of you to do that.“

It’s not a wrong interpretation of the apron. I think so, at least.
It’s a tradition.

“Oh, is that so? Then I’ll try it tonight.”
“Nothing but the apron?”
“Do it, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria seem to be up for it.

After having dinner, I wash their bodies with warm water and head to the bedroom.
It feels like the wedding night.
While my heart was aflutter, the door opens.

Even though I washed their bodies just now.
Well, that is that, this is this.
There's always another stomach for dessert.

"Ooh!"

Dessert, indeed.
When they enter the room, I let out such a sound subconsciously.

"How does it look?"

Asks what appears to be Roxanne's figure. I can see her body yet I can't.
'Don't cover your head and leave your bottom exposed.' Her big breasts are concealed yet they're not. 'Genius displays even in childhood.'
The volume of her mounds pushes the apron from underneath, and expands the gap between the apron and her skin even further.
Although the top of her chest is covered with the white apron, the swelling which is pushing from the sides is emphasizing the size of her chest.

"Wonderful."

One word is enough.

"Thank you very much."
"Sherry looks great, too."

The force of the apron covering Sherry's petite body is tremendous.
She looks just like a child wife.

"I'm a little embarrassed."

This shy expression of hers is the best!

"It looks great on Miria, too."
"Yes, desu."

I would like to see the place where this bluish tail is coming from.
The apron's compatibility with cat ears is preeminent.
The contrast between the frilled shoulder straps and the laced hem is irresistible.

Wow!
Amazing!
I want to eat them!

“Umm… Master, please eat to your liking.”

Now that Roxanne has said so, how can I not eat?
This world is a paradise.
Eden.
The promised land flowing with milk and honey.

Chapter 110 - Cat's Eye

I wake up pleasantly fatigued.
I'm languid on this fine morning.
There's residual passion from last night.

I must make a correction.
It was main course, not dessert.
It has been a long time since I last activated Sex Maniac.
Because it was main course, I couldn't help it.

I doze off for a while to soak the sweet aftertaste in.
Eventually, the pink haze fades away.
At the same time, Roxanne kisses me.

N-Not good.
Even though it took so long for the lingering scent to go away.
Even though it's an every morning thing, it's not good this time.
Last night, I drifted off to sleep without cancelling Sex Maniac. I want to push her down right now.

Roxanne's soft lips and smoothly moving tongue both are sweet.
It's stimulating my sensuality.
I desperately endure the desire for sex which is overcoming me.

But I hold out.
Followed by Roxanne's, I endure Sherry's and Miria's lips.
I'm a man of steel.

"Good morning, desu."
"Good morning, Miria."

I let go of Miria and get up.
Because I said that I would eat them, is that why it feels awkward?
Oh well, it's not like we don't do this every morning.

“Yes, desu.”
“Not good.”

Miria brings my clothes over as usual.
I decide to cut off the temptation and get dressed up.
There are things to be done today.
I throw my feelings aside. It’s a new day.

After having dressed up, we move to the labyrinth.
We seem to have gotten accustomed to Haruba’s 16th floor.
The number of attacks received has decreased. Things have settled down.

Although I said ‘decreased’, it doesn’t mean ‘zero’.
Because the duration of battles is longer, it’s still difficult.
The three in the front take on a group of monsters.
Roxanne exchanges an attack with a monster. Sherry thrusts her spear.
Miria stabs with her rapier.

I cast spells from the back.
Three Clamshells drop down with sixth [Sand Storm].
When you take out first batch of monsters, it becomes easier afterward.
Everyone surrounds the remaining Bitch Butterfly and finishes it off.

Next group comprises three Bitch Butterflies and two Clamshells.
It is unusual to have more Bitch Butterflies.
I use wind spells to take out Bitch Butterflies whose weakness is wind magic.

“Here it comes.”

Roxanne’s voice resounds.
The Clamshell spits water.
Roxanne dodges it with ease.

To be honest, ranged attacks are not that big of a threat.
Roxanne dodges all of the attacks from the front.
Unfortunately, the long-ranged attack of Clamshell isn’t considered a magic skill, so the casting delay is non-existent.

Monsters approach from the front.
Three Bitch Butterflies and a Clamshell.

There's another Clamshell in the second row.
Orange magic formation appears under a Bitch Butterfly in the front.

"Sherry."
"Yes."

Sherry pokes her spear into the Bitch Butterfly immediately after I call out to her.
She cancels its skill with [Incantation Interruption] skill of her weapon.

"Here it comes."

Roxanne tilts her neck immediately after announcing that.
While tilting her neck, she takes on the Bitch Butterfly's attack with her shield.
Water gushes in from there where Roxanne's head was supposed to be.
When the water breaks off, Roxanne straightens her neck and moves to the right, and exchanges an attack with the Clamshell.

The attack seemed to be from the Clamshell in the second row.
While confronting two monsters in the front, she fended off the attack from the Clamshell in the second row.
Roxanne is terrifying as ever.

I take out the Bitch Butterflies in six [Breeze Storm]s.
It may have become easier but that doesn't mean we can drop our guard.
That said, it's rare for us to receive attacks in case of two monsters.
Without much trouble, I finish the two bivalves off with a [Sand Storm].

"I'll be using sword now."

Because my MP has decreased, I pull out Durandal and instruct Roxanne.
Since I don't cast spells when I use Durandal, any combination of monsters is fine.
I haven't changed the style of my swordfight.

To take out a monster, I can simply use spells until the monster closes in and then finish it off with sword.
Inflicting some damage using spells is better than doing nothing.
Also, I'm prioritizing crystallization over experience at the moment.
Therefore, I should complement Durandal with magic.

As to why I'm not doing so is because I have already issued instructions and it will get confusing if I modify the instructions.
When I use Durandal, the efficiency of acquiring experience drops.
Considering the efficiency of acquiring experience, it's better to use Durandal only for the purpose of recovering MP.
[Rush] is quite useful nevertheless.

It's logical to recover MP using Durandal and use that MP to cast spells.
When I use Durandal, the duration of battles lengthens.
Consequently, the experience acquired in a given time decreases.

So far, I haven't been using magic along with sword but now, I have to obtain a white magic crystal before the auction.
Still, it's better not to change instructions every time.
If she asks for the reason, it'll be hard for me to explain.

Next is the matter concerning jobs.
Four jobs is the limit while using Durandal and [Crystallization 64x].
If possible, I want to use three jobs.
While using sword, I can cancel Wizard job and activate Warrior.

In short, I can't use magic while using Durandal.
Durandal is for the sole purpose of recovering MP.

"Understood. This way."

Roxanne guides us to next location.
We normally walk while traversing through the labyrinth but break into a run when we spot monsters.
If we wait for too long, we might receive a ranged attack.
Since I'm not using magic at the moment, the group of monsters comprises two Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly and a Sarracenia.

Roxanne slants to her side and rushes diagonally, and slashes at a Clamshell.
Taking the enemies on from the centre is riskier.
Whittle them down from the wings.

I invoke [Rush].
I receive a body slam from a Clamshell and return the favor with a strike.

Roxanne and Miria take on a monster each, too.
Sherry is nudging with her spear from the back.

The Clamshell opens its shell.
Its mouth opens wide. There's no sign of water.
It bites me.
I barely evade it.

When it opens its shell, you have to first be careful of water and then evade its bite.
Even though its movement is excessive while biting, it's not easy to deal with.
It feels like a feint.

I invoke [Rush] again and take the Clamshell out.
Next is the Sarracenia.
This one is troublesome because it uses digestive fluid.
I use [Rush] in rapid succession and finish it off nonetheless.

Using [Rush], I take the Bitch Butterfly out.
I attack the last Clamshell, which Roxanne was confronting, from behind.
Roxanne is terrifying.

The Clamshell opens its shell.
Roxanne maneuvers the upper half of her body and dodges the water.
Brilliantly dodged.
All the party members surround the Clamshell and finish it off.

"I have fought a lot of Clamshells yet I'm unable to understand the pattern of its attack."
"I know, right?"
"When it opens its shell, I don't know if it's going to bite or spit water."
"Umm… when it spits water, it opens its shell like this; when it bites, it opens its shell like this."

Roxanne explains.
Therefore, it's impossible to understand.
I look at Sherry. She's puzzled just as well.

“Can you distinguish between different attacks of a Clamshell, Miria?”
“She can try next time to distinguish, she says.”

In other words, she doesn’t know.

“Try best, desu.”
“I see. That’s great.”

Rather than giving up on her, I raise her spirit.
After returning from the labyrinth and having breakfast, I take out the amber necklace.
It has been a long time since I last took it out.

“Amber, desu.”
“Do you know about it?”
“Miria rarely found it where she used to live but when she fished in the north sea, she often caught it instead of fish. Everyone except Miria used to get excited upon catching it instead of fish.”

But Miria gets more excited upon catching fish.

“It’s beautiful, isn’t it?”
“Beautiful, desu.”
“If there’s one that suits Miria, I’ll buy it.”
“Buy, desu.”

She seems to be pleased somewhat.
But not as pleased as she tends to be upon the mention of fish.
Choosing which fish to buy used to be cumbersome.

“Are we going to Palmasque?”

Sherry immediately realizes what I intend to do.

“That’s right. I have received an order for three mirrors.”
“Okay.”
“Well then, Roxanne.”
“Yes. Thank you very much.”

I put the necklace around Roxanne’s neck.
The amber necklace is shining on Roxanne’s chest.
So much so that I want to grab it.

Just like you grab a white peach.
And rip your finger into its soft pulp.
Just like I did last night from the side of the apron.

N-No.
This sexual desire is due to Sex Maniac.
I wonder if it was a bad decision to keep it when I went to sleep.
Usually, I'm not this desirous of sex. Surely. Probably.

I put Sherry's necklace around her neck and head out.
First up is the amber merchant in Bode.
I jump to Bode's adventurers guild.

"Welcome."

When I enter the building next to the adventurers guild, there was an old man with cat ears.
The same old merchant.

"Sorry for bothering you."
"Not at all, not at all. I have been waiting for you."
"Can I get some amber ores?"
"Of course, it's available now."

He seems to remember me.
And amber seems to be available, too.

"If there's an amber necklace that suits her, I'll be buying it."

I put my hand on Miria's shoulder.
It's not wise, however, to expend unnecessarily now that the auction is close.
But I can't afford for only Miria to not have a necklace.

If I can sell amber ores and mirrors, the profit can offset the cost of the necklace.
So it's fine.
And there's a possibility that the magic crystal will turn white.
I am hunting with [Crystallization 64x]. I'll manage it somehow.

“Certainly. Here, have a seat, please.”
“Thank you.”

The old man with cat ears urges the four of us to sit.
The old merchant brings the amber.

“I can provide you with twelve amber ores of the same quality as last time.”
“I’ll buy all twelve.”
“Thank you very much. And here is the necklace.”

The old man brings amber necklaces.
Woah! So many.
Because I have already done business with him in the past, is that why he thinks I’m a valued customer?
He puts some in front of Roxanne and Sherry as well.

No, don’t.
Roxanne and Sherry already have theirs.
Roxanne doesn’t seem to be enchanted.
Sherry is just appraising the product. Is that it?

“Wow, desu.”
“There are too many necklaces, I think.”
“Beautiful, desu.”

It’s good for Miria to be excited but…
The three of them are staring fixedly.
They are checking the necklaces out.
Will it be alright?

“Miria likes this one.”

Ah, Roxanne has come back to her senses.
She puts the amber necklace on Miria’s chest.
It’s fine as long as she doesn’t put it on her chest.
It was a good idea to have had them put their necklaces on beforehand.

“What’s best about this necklace?”
“She has a keen eye. This is one of our prided necklaces. It boasts the amber jewel of the highest grade.”

Asks Sherry. The old merchant answers.

“It’s clear and radiant.”
“It’s rare to obtain such an amber. It’s the best we have received in past couple of years.”
“There’s a tint of red as well.”
“People get their hands on such an amber once in a decade. Furthermore, there are multiple jewels of such an impeccable quality in this necklace.”
“Then it must be quite expensive.”
“Not at all. This one costs around 70,000 Nars but we can offer you a discounted price of 69,800 Nars.”

It’s expensive. Very.

“The one which is a bit mild will suit Miria more, I think.”

Sherry puts the necklace back.
She’s well aware of the objective.
She wasn’t having a friendly chat with the old merchant.
She seems to be in her senses, too.

“That’s right. Then how about this necklace?”

The old man takes out another necklace.
Rustling sound could be heard from behind the counter.

“There’s more?”

If it were there, he should have shown it when I asked for a necklace.
I’m sure he lined up those necklaces on the table in front of Roxanne and Sherry to force a sale.

“Red, pink, yellow, white; this necklace comprises amber jewels of various colors. When it’s put on, it resembles a cat’s eye. Therefore, I would like you to buy this one for this catkin lady.”

Was that a pun?
The old man passes the necklace to Miria.

“Beautiful, desu.”

Well, the necklace is indeed an interesting one, with amber jewels of different colors.
Not bad.
Miria puts it around her neck.

“Doesn’t it look good?”
“I does look good.”

Roxanne and Sherry approve.

“Because it’ll be in care of someone from catkin tribe, I’ll give this to you for a discounted price of 45,000 Nars.”

Is this price reasonable?

“So, what do you say?”
“Err…”

When I ask Miria, hoping for her to decline, she was hesitating.
Her expression tells me that she likes it.

I confirm Sherry’s expression as well.
The price of 45,000 Nars is same as the price of her necklace.
Is Sherry fine with it?

“Then I would like to buy it.”
“Thank you very much. Including the amber ores and considering the fact that there’s a lady from catkin tribe with you, the total amount to pay shall be 38,200 Nars.”

Isn’t that the same excuse from a while ago?
The reason he gave for 30% discount is same as the reason he gave for the original discount.
So, was 45,000 Nars really a reasonable price?
Or did he foresee 30% discount and quoted higher price from the onset?

It’s not inferior to Roxanne’s and Sherry’s necklaces in the slightest.
Such a thing, huh?

“It’s good, isn’t it, Miria?”
“Yes, desu.”

“This small case for the amber ore, made in Talem, is a gift for our dear customer.”

I pay the amount and receive the goods.
Because I was the one who gave him the idea of using cases made in Talem, he gifts one to me.

“Miria, keep the necklace on.”
“Okay, desu. Thank you, desu.”

Miria bows.
She seems to be pleased with it, so it’s money well spent.

Chapter 111 - Dissapointing Mermaid.

From Bode's adventurer's guild, we warped to Zabir's labyrinth.
My emotions became depressed, but we hunted demons and recovered my MP.
The labyrinth of Zabir is just a relay point, we left it and went to Palmasque.
We appeared in the adventurers guild in Palmasque.

"It looks like this your first time in Palmasque, Miria."

Miria stands curiously looking out at Palmasque for the first time.
Her cat ears are standing upright.
It's so cute.

"It is white, desu."
"The buildings are white and beautiful."

I put my hand on Miria's head.
While patting her head, I lightly touched her cat ears.

"Sea, desu."
"That's right, was Palmasque supposed to be an island?"

Can you hear the waves, do you smell the water?
Maybe it's something only a Diver can notice.
Or… can you smell the fish?

"xxxxxxxxx"
"Yes, desu."

Roxanne tells Miria off.
We should tell her we came to buy mirror's, not fish.

"I'll leave it to you."
"I understand."

“We’ll take care of it.”
“Yes, desu.”

I send off the three of them.
I return to Zabir’s labyrinth to recover my MP.
The amount of MP consumed for [Warp] seems to have increased because the amount of party members increased.
I didn’t notice any difference using [Warp] to nearby places, but the difference was made obvious when we came to Palmasque.

How will we get home?
Going straight from Palmasque to the house would probably be bad.
A relay point might be needed.
I need to avoid the mirrors getting broken in a fight, so should I use the recovery medecine?

I returned to Quratar to fill in time.
Quratar’s 13th floor can be used to replenish my recovery medicine, but I don’t go there, because it’s scary.
Instead I fought the Spice Spider boss on the 3rd floor.
There’s not much danger there if I use Durandal.

The pepper item that is dropped by the Spice Spider is indispensable in my rich eating habits.
There might be a better hunting ground for it, but I don’t need it that much.
After filling in time for a while, I used [Warp] to Palmasque again.
When I arrive in the adventurers guild of Palmasque, the three of them were waiting.

“Sorry, Did you wait long?”
“Don’t worry about it, we just got here.”

They have a mirror each.
It seems they got them with no problems.
We went to Zabir’s labyrinth.

“I’ll use medicine to recover before we return to the house. We have mirrors, so we shouldn’t look for any demons.”
“I understand.”

I stopped Roxanne, who was about to look for prey.
After leaving Zabir, we went to our home in Quratar.

My feelings aren't too depressed.
It was the right choice to make a stop at the relay point.
I can tolerate this much.

"The raw gemstones sold at the usual price. The mirrors were the usual price as well."

After putting the mirrors in the store room, Sherry gives me the details as she passes me the money.
I thought that the uncut amber wouldn't sell, so I had given them money for the mirrors.

"Good. I wasn't worried, because Sherry is a good negotiator."
"There are also two orders for amber necklaces."
"For two?"

I'm happy to get orders.
The amber necklaces have a considerable profit margin.
And I can sell two of them.
I might not even need the white crystal anymore.

"When the bosses wife goes out for meetings, she puts on her amber necklace, and it seems to have attracted attention."

A walking billboard.
I sold her a good quality necklace.
If you sell a good item cheaply, you will attract more orders.

"As planned."

Sherry's eyes seem to be looking at me a little coldly, but things have gone as planned.
The plan has shown a good outcome.

"One order is from a lady who serves as a representative on the council committee. She isn't worried about the cost, and wants one of the highest

quality. She seems to be quite an influential person and will pay a lot for something of high quality. The bosses wife says she'll pay 35 gold coins."

To even find out the amount of money for the sale…
Sherry is truly excellent.

"I understand."
"The second one is an order from the bosses wife's friend. She'd like a similar necklace to the bosses wife, with a price of around 25 gold coins. I think we should prepare a necklace slightly inferior to the one the bosses wife has."
"We shouldn't prepare one the same price?"
"I told the bosses wife hers was at a special price when I sold it. It would be bad for her if we brought one the same quality. Just slightly inferior should be good and shouldn't cause any problems."

I see.
That sort of thing.
As expected of Sherry.

"It might be difficult to find."

We need to satisfy the pride of the bosses wife who gave us this business, as well as satisfying the customer.
It will be tough.

"It will be alright. All the amber necklaces are high quality unique items. The colour and sizes are all slightly different. Two that are the same don't exist. We can spin the description of the item however we want."
"Ah, you think so?"

Dark Sherry.
She's very reliable.

Going to buy the amber necklaces after we sell a mirror will be good.
They might not have anything else to sell me yet, but it's possible some goods have arrived.
It's worthwhile.

30% discount is only effective when I buy multiple items, so I'll buy both at the same time.
I can't expect him to have uncut amber every time I arrive.

We hunted until evening came, and then left the labyrinth.
I ask what everyone wants for dinner as we shop.

"For dinner, I'd like to make pot-au-feu with Miria."
"Pot-au-feu? That sounds delicious."
"We won't need soup then, I'll make a stir-fry."
"Okay. I'll also make a dish."

The pot-au-feu that Roxanne makes is meat and vegetables slowly cooked, and is considerably delicious.
If there is pot-au-feu, I'll be happy.
It gives me a chance to make a japanese-style soup.

It probably won't go well the first time.
Even if I fail it will be alright if we have pot-au-feu.
If it goes well, we can include it with the pot-au-feu.

After returning to the house, I make the japanese-style soup.
I boil some water and stew clams in it with a pinch of salt.
It's a seafood soup seasoned with salt.

I'm supposed to make it with seaweed.
I don't know what to use instead.
I'm just making it from salt and clams.
I stew it carefully over a low heat.

"Well. This should be alright."

It's only salty, but it's refreshing and a good result.
It's not bad.
I'm using the dropped ingredients, so there wasn't much preparation required.

We don't have a wooden bowl, so I put it in a cup.
I place it on the dinning table.

“It’s very delicious. As expected of Master.”
“I haven’t tasted this before.”
“Tasty clam, desu.”

Even though the soup is only salty, the opinion of it is alright?

“Hey Miria, if we cook fish with this as well, do you think it will be delicious?”

As well as clam, it should be good to stew other seafood with it.
It’s like cooking in sea water.
Miria’s cat ears react with a twitch.
They turned towards me to make certain she heard my comment.

“Yes, desu. Delicious, desu.”

Miria answered without needing Roxanne’s interpreting.
Trying this with a whole fish might be nice.
I’ll make that next time.

The next day I sell a mirror.
In the morning I go to the duke, and then reach the 16th floor boss room after that.
There’s a room with only a door to the front and back.
It’s the standby room.

“The Clamshell boss is the Oyster Shell. It has a rough shell and it’s offensive power is greater than the Clamshell.”

Sherry gives a description.
Reliable.

I prepare Durandal as I listen to Sherry.
We head into the boss room.
Smoke gathers and two demons appear.
Clamshell and Oyster Shell.

The Oyster Shell is another bivalve demon.
It’s one size larger than the Clamshell.

It's shell is quite rugged.
It would be painful to be hit by that.

Roxanne rushed up to the Oyster Shell right at the start.
Sherry and Miria also surrounded the Oyster Shell.
The Clamshell is my opponent.
I move past the Clamshell to take it on from the other side.

The Clamshell might shoot water.
I can't let it face in the direction towards the others.
I attacked it with Durandal, and it focused it's attention on me.

Since we are fighting a boss, I'm using [Fourth job] with Explorer, Hero, Monk, and Warrior.
Actually, I'd like to try without Wizard and [Plating] from Alchemist. I want to fight using Knights defense.
Can I get some breathing room like that?
Will it be alright even on upper floors if we get in a difficult fight?

No. Am I putting the cart before the horse?
Entering the labyrinth, getting experience and becoming stronger, the purpose is to earn money.
I want to get more bonus points so I can add them to [Increased Experience] and [Increased Crystallization].
I don't need to fight against anyone too tough.

I use [Rush] on the Clamshell.
The shell moves.
The Clamshell opens it's mouth and prepares to sandwich me.

I withdraw, and manage to avoid it this time.
According to Roxanne, the way the shell opens when it's going to shoot water, and when it's going to sandwich is different.
I can't tell the difference at all.

I finish it by using [Rush] in rapid succession.
I joined the seige on the Oyster Shell.
I attack it from the side because Roxanne is handling the front.
Miria is to one side, and Sherry is slightly back to the other side, each attacking.

The shell of the Oyster Shell moves.
It tries to sandwich Roxanne.
Roxxane dodges with a half step.
She blocks it's charge with her shield as well.

It feels peaceful when Roxanne is the opponent.
I attack from the back, and the shellfish stops it's movement.
I use [Rush] and drive in Durandal.

The Oyster Shell's body shakes.
It falls to the side.
Smoke spouts from the demon.
It seems that I gave the decisive blow this time.

When we surround a boss with everyone, it's not certain that I'll be the one to give the final blow.
When we surrounded the Clamshell before it was Sherry who gave the final blow.
It's the same thing.

The fact it has a large amount of HP doesn't really matter.
The ratio of HP that I do compared to the other three is what's important.
If I simplify it, if those three combined do half the damage of Durandal, then the probability of me delivering the final blow is 2/3. If the other three can do the same damage as Durandal, then the probability of me giving the final blow becomes half.
Later on, it might not be worth using [Increased experience] and [Increased crystallization] against bosses.

If I think about it, is it a good thing?

The smoke disappears and an item is left behind.
The dropped item from the Oyster Shell is volley TN: ボレー
Is it bird food?
I thought it would be an oyster because it's from an oyster.

"I thought an oyster would be dropped."
"The oyster is a rarer item, there's no helping it if it doesn't drop."

Sherry teaches me.
So there is an oyster?

The volley is the usual drop, and oyster is the rare drop.
I should have used Cook.

I didn't use it, so there's no helping it.
If it's similar to the clam and I need 4, I'd have to do this fight dozens of times.
That might be hard.
We obtained the volley, and continued to the 17th floor.

"Sherry, what demon is on Haruba's 17th floor?"
"The Kettle Mermaid. It occasionally uses water magic, and has a resistance to water magic. It's weakness is earth magic and there's a chance of being poisoned when it attacks you."
"It's element is the same as the Clamshell? That's good. Roxanne, please find one."
"Um, I think there is a group with both Clamshell and Kettle Mermaid nearby. I don't think there are many, is that alright?"

Roxanne asks.
As the floors go up, the maximum number of demons increases as well.
Does the chance to find a single demon on a floor also become more difficult?

"I understand. Roxanne freely use your judgement in the future."
"Thank you"

Roxanne guides us.
She guides us to a group of one Kettle Mermaid, and one Clamshell.
I use [Sand Storm].

The Kettle Mermaid is a disappointing mermaid.
Even though it's called a mermaid. The face and chest of a beautiful woman… is not there.
It has a long mouth and a distorted clown face.
So, it's a kettle?

It becomes a fish straight away below the neck.
It's more of a human faced fish than a mermaid.
With the face of a clown.
It doesn't walk, but instead swims towards us.

It’s sickening.
Also, it has poison.
I use earth magic again.

The Kettle Mermaid and Clamshell are defeated with seven earth magics.
The combat time went smoothly.

Chapter 112 - 17th Floor

On Haruba's 17th floor, the next group we're up against is that of a Bitch Butterfly and Kettle Mermaids.
I take the Kettle Mermaids out, whose weakness is earth magic, in seven earth spells. After which, I finish the Bitch Butterfly off in three [Breeze Ball]s.

"Although the duration of battle was long, there doesn't seem to be any problem with this combination."
"Yes. Kettle Mermaids and Clamshells both are weak against same attribute of magic, therefore, it will be easier to shortlist the combinations of monsters. If you can take out Kettle Mermaids and Clamshells, there will only be one or two monsters remaining at the end."

Honestly, I think Roxanne becomes whatever you want her to be.
I cast [Meteor Crash].
The Kettle Mermaids collapse in just one [Meteor Crash].
Like I conjectured, [Meteor Crash] seems to be effective against monsters whose weakness is earth magic.

[Meteor Crash] is a magic attack where you shoot a scorching meteorite.
If it possesses earth attribute, too, it won't be absurd.
It works against monsters whose weakness is fire magic, and equally against monsters whose weakness is earth magic.
If it weren't special, it wouldn't be a bonus spell.

"This much trial is enough."

We seem to be able to fight on Haruba's 17th floor without any trouble.
It's time to kick the exploration off.

The next group we encounter comprises three Kettle Mermaids and two Clamshells.
Although there are many monsters, all of them are weak against earth magic, so there's no problem.

I cast [Sandstorm].
In the middle of the attack, a Kettle Mermaid suddenly comes to a halt.

“Here it comes.”

Unfortunately, a blue magic formation appears under the feet of the mermaid.
Nope. Tail, not feet.

“Water magic, huh?”

The Kettle Mermaid spits water from its hyottoko-esque mouth. (TN: Hyottokohttps://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyottoko)
It’s more of an archerfish than a mermaid.
Roxanne maneuvers the upper half of her body and dodges the water.
At the same time, a Clamshell in the front opens its shell.
“Here it comes.”

The Clamshell spits water, too.
When there are many monsters, such things happen.That’s why it’s difficult.
Although Roxanne was in a difficult position, having already dodged the water magic attack of the mermaid, she twists her body splendidly to evade the bivalve’s water.

As expected of Roxanne.
If I were there, I would have surely received it.
Actually, forget the second attack, I’m not even sure if I would have dodged the first one.

While enduring the [Sandstorm], two Kettle Mermaids and a Clamshell line up in the front.
Roxanne, Sherry and Miria take on a monster each.
The Clamshell in the second row seems to be waiting for an opportunity to spit water.
The Kettle Mermaid, that used the water magic attack earlier, joins the Clamshell in the second row.

Is this so because it needs time to construct the magic formation?
The Kettle Mermaid requires magic formation to use its water magic attack.
Therefore, it requires time.

It's likely that the water magic attack of the Kettle Mermaid is stronger than the Clamshell's.
It's not like I'm not gonna volunteer myself to test it.
There was no opportunity for the monsters in the second row to spit water.
All the monsters drop down with next [Sandstorm].

We continue to hunt on Haruba's 17th floor and leave the labyrinth when it was time for breakfast.
I decided against moving to Bode's 12th floor.
Because tartar sauce is required for fish fry.
Even if I catch a whole fish, I won't be able to do anything with it.

Miria understands that, too.
Which reminds me, It's about time I visit Quratar's 16th floor.

"Let's go to Bode's 12th floor after breakfast."
"Okay, desu."
"I wanted to clear Quratar's 16th floor but I have decided to do it tomorrow, early morning."

I talk it over with Roxanne and company.

"I have no issue with early morning."
"The monster native to Quratar's 17th floor is Ma Bream."
"Go, desu."

Says Miria without needing Roxanne to translate.
She must have caught the word 'Ma Bream' from Sherry's conversation.
Well, if we can catch whole fish on Quratar's 17th floor, there's no need to go to Bode's 12th floor.

"Alright then, after breakfast, let's grab the map and head to Quratar's labyrinth. I'll ask of you three to prepare the meal while I'm out to sell the mirrors."

If I take the three of them with me, I can deliver the mirrors in one go but I won't do it.
It'll be bad for the Duke seems to have taken interest in Roxanne.
And there's a possibility that Roxanne will blurt out things that should otherwise be kept secret.
Therefore, I'll go by myself.

I jump to Bode with a mirror.
I deliver it to the working room.

“Michio-dono, did you come here alone?”

The Duke asks after I deliver the mirror.
I knew it. Not bringing Roxanne here with me was the right decision.

“Yes, I did come here alone.”
“N-No, I just wanted to hear about that affair from her. There’s no motive I should have guilty conscience for.”

The Duke makes an excuse in a hurry.
This is bad.
I might have subconsciously glared at him with bloodlust.

“…”
“I’m already married to Cassia.”

Obviously.

He has such an outstandingly beautiful wife.
If he ever tries to ogle Roxanne, I’ll take the matter to cassia.

“Oh well, anyways.”
“The price of this one is 10,000 Nars.”

Gozer takes out a gold coin.
Gozer must really be having it tough under the Duke.

I receive the coin and return home.
After having breakfast, I make mayonnaise with the help of Miria.
Because we have already had the meal, I decide to use whole eggs this time.

“Miria, can you blend it?”
“Do, desu.”

Because blending it is difficult, I leave it to Miria.
Miria blends it hard.
Blending it really is difficult.

After a while, Miria's hands slow down.
Still, her hands are not that slow. Because it's for the fish, perhaps?

"If it's not mixed well, it will not be as tasty as the whole fish tatsuta-age."
"Do, desu."

When her hands slow further down, I remind her.
Making fish fry won't be as hard a work as this.

"The more you blend it, the tastier will the whole fish fry be."
"Blend, desu."

If it's not blended, it's not mayonnaise.

"Alright, it's done."
"…Okay, desu."

All this blending seems to have drained all her energy.
I'm sure that she will demand fish fry soon after all this hard work.
Having made mayonnaise, we move to Quratar's 16th floor.

"Let's warm up a bit because it has been quite some time since we were last here."
"Understood."

I instruct Roxanne.
I has been a while since we last visited Quratar's 16th floor.
Warm up is a must.

We hunt monsters under Roxanne's guidance.
Ah, I remember.
You mostly need wind spells on Quratar's 16th floor.
It was an easy floor. I remember.

Regrettably, it isn't as easy this time as it was last time.
Oh well, it can't be helped.
Our equipment have upgraded and I have alba this time. But that's about it.
Our levels are essentially the same as last time.

My emphasis is on crystallization for the time being, due to which, the speed of leveling up has dropped.
This is probably the reason.

“Is this much enough?”

It’s time to finish warming up and start exploring.
Only, this time around, we will explore per the map of Quratar’s labyrinth.

“This way. But there’s a group of Bitch Butterflies and Fly Traps on the way.”
“Whatever, let’s proceed.”
“Understood.”

I can’t be picky about the combination of monsters now that I’m following the map.
I have to take care of whichever monster I encounter en route.
There’s no bypass marked on the map.

However, it’s unusual for Fly Traps to be on 16th floor.
Actually no, it’s not unusual.
Fly trap is native to Quratar’s 13th floor, so it’s possible to encounter it on 16th floor.
Roxanne was avoiding it when we were here last time.

Quratar’s 16th floor doesn’t house only those monsters that are weak against wind magic.
In other words, it was all thanks to Roxanne.

“As expected of Roxanne. I knew Roxanne would be a big help.”
“Eh? Ah… yes, thank you very much.”

Even though the person doesn’t understand, the feeling of gratitude has been conveyed.
Now that there are monsters that are weak against different attributes of magic, I can use Durandal instead but my MP isn’t particularly low.
I’ll be using it in the boss battle anyway.

We advance through the cave.
We come across a group of one Bitch Butterfly and one Fly Trap.
I cast [Breezestorm].

Ideally, I should first take the Fly Trap out because of the poison but the Bitch Butterfly is resistant to fire magic.
So I can't use fire magic which is the weakness of Fly Trap.
Using wind magic, which is the weakness of Bitch Butterfly, I first try to take the butterfly out.

The monsters close in. Roxanne and Miria take them on.
Sherry positions herself behind the two, holding her spear with [Incantation Interruption] skill in her hands and keeping her eyes on the monsters.
I position myself to Sherry's side, casting spells. This is our formation.

The Fly Trap splits its head open to trap Roxanne in it, but she shifts to her left and dodges it.
Miria slashes at the Bitch Butterfly.

I take the Bitch Butterfly out with next [Breezestorm].
We surround the remaining monster, Fly Trap.
I cast fire spells from there where it can't attack me directly.
Sherry pokes her spear from a distance.

Roxanne dodges the attack of the Fly Trap with ease.
I shoot a [Fireball] at the Fly Trap.
Sherry and Miria stab their spear and rapier into it, respectively.
The Fly Trap collapses under the attacks of all the party members.

In the end, it was engulfed in the flames of my [Fireball].
The Fly Trap falls down to the side.
It finally turns into smoke and dissipates.

Ah!

When the smoke cleared away, what remained was a card.
A monster card.

When I used [Appraisal], it said Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card.
Is it, really?
Fly Trap surely has a split head.
Just like a pair of scissors.

“Yes, desu.”

Miria picks it up and passes it to me.
Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant, huh?
Although I instructed Luke the broker to not actively search for a Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, I get one myself.

“[MP Absorption], right?”
“That’s right.”
“What if I don’t use it simultaneously with a Kobold Monster Card?”
“If you fuse it with a weapon, the weapon will acquire [MP Shave] skill. When you attack with the weapon, you recover a bit of MP.”

Sherry explains.
Bit by bit, huh?
I wonder how big or small is that bit.
It can’t be big, surely.

“Is it good?”
“I’ve heard good things about it. Wizards carry it as a substitute for amulet. It would look funny, though, if a wizard were to use their staff to hit.”

So it works as a substitute for an amulet. It’s still better than consuming pills.
I shouldn’t have high hopes, though.
So, should I try it?

“If I fuse it with shoes, can’t I recover a bit of MP with every step I take in the labyrinth.”
“It’s impossible.”
“What if I stab the sole of my shoe into a half dead monster?”

Why is it not possible?
If I can’t recover a bit of MP with every step while I walk, I should be able to recover MP if I pierce the monster with the sole of my shoe.

Or should I try attaching knives to the soles of my shoes? Just like skates.
Even if it recovers MP just once, it's not a bad deal.

"…"

Sherry looks at me with cold eyes.
A pioneer is never understood at first.
She will understand with the passage of time.

"Since wizards and monks use it, it's probably better to fuse it with a wand. I can hit the monster with the tip of the wand or when I walk, I can hold it upside-down, so that its tip touches the ground. Ah! Whenever I use area of attack magic, I can keep hitting the monsters with the tip of the wand until the attack cools down.
"…"

Oh time, catch me if you can.

"L-Let's move on?"
"Yes."

Roxanne urges me to proceed.
Mostly, we proceed per map but when we spot monsters in the vicinity, we take them out.
We can afford to wander around because on Quratar's 16th floor, the combinations of monsters that require only wind spells are many.

On the way, I pull out Durandal and recover MP.

We fight Madame Butterfly.
Because we have fought Madame Butterfly many times already, there's no problem.
We finish the seductive-eyed boss off.

I add fifth job and activate Cook before moving on to 17th floor.
It's funny that I had four jobs during the boss battle but five after the battle.
Oh well, Cook is necessary, so it can't be helped.
Because I'm not familiar with 17th floor, Monk is needed, too.

On 17th floor, I cast [Meteor Crash] all of a sudden.
Ma Breams Lv17 drop down but Bitch Butterfly Lv17 doesn't.
So I can one-hit Ma Breams, huh?
[Meteor Crash] is undoubtedly effective against the monsters that are weak against earth magic.

Out of the three Ma Breams, one dropped a whole fish.
I finish the remaining Bitch Butterfly with a [Breezeball].

"Whole fish, desu."
"To get one at the first attempt is definitely a good omen."

I receive the whole fish from Miria.
Thereafter, we continued to hunt until we had two whole fish.

On Quratar's 17th floor, you mostly need earth and wind magic.
Due to Ma Breams, whose weakness is earth magic, 17th floor is more difficult compared to 16th, where only wind magic was required, but it still doesn't seem to be that difficult.
We seem to be able to fight on Quratar's 17th floor without much trouble.

Chapter 113 - Negotiator

Next day. I make tartar sauce, fillet the whole fish, dredge it in bread crumbs and fry it.
This is the result of high quality ingredients.
The taste of whole fish fry is a level above fish fry's.

"It's delicious."
"Tasty, desu."

When I bite through the crispy coating of bread crumbs into the soft fish meat inside like puri~, it melts in my mouth like juwa~.
Perfect harmony between light and rich.
The tartar sauce isn't too strong, resulting in a faintly sour taste.

"It's really delicious. I'm really happy that I was bestowed with such a luxury."
"Same as what Roxanne-san said."
"Happy, desu."

The three of them are satisfied.
As to why Miria is feeling satisfied, it's probably because she made the mayonnaise herself.

"Do you remember the soup I made the other day? Next time, I'll make one with whole fish."
"Soup, desu."
"Or I can fry it with bread crumbs again."
"Soup, desu."

This is most likely the-difficulty-of-making-mayonnaise talking.

The whole fish fry was truly satisfying.
It was so good that I subconsciously stretched my hand out for one more piece.
It finished quite quickly. Miria has her shoulders drooped. Oh well, it can't

be helped.
Expect more next time.

I deliver third mirror to the Duke during the early morning break.
I didn't bring Roxanne with me, of course.
I receive the amount and an order for three more mirrors.

I return home and take out the necklaces.
Before going to buy mirrors, we have to get our preparations done.
I jump to Bode's adventurers' guild and head to the amber merchant.

"Welcome. Unfortunately, we don't have amber ores available at the moment."
"That's bad. Fortunately, I came here today to buy a necklace."
"Very well. Come inside, please."

The old man with cat ears leads us inside the building.

"I'll leave choosing the necklace to you three."
"Certainly."
"Please leave it to me."
"Okay, desu."

While following the old man, I instruct them.

"Last time, you showed us a necklace that, according to you, had the best amber you obtained in the past few years. Is that necklace still available?"

Before taking her seat, Sherry makes the first move and asks the merchant.

"Of course. Here it is."

The old man hurries behind the counter and brings the necklace.
Sherry asked for the necklace from the other day, huh?

"It's wonderful, indeed. This color, this transparency; it's certainly the amber jewel of the highest grade."

Sherry picks the necklace up and praises it.
Is it alright to praise it so much?
He may take unfair advantage of us if we show weakness.

“Exactly.”
“What was its price, again?”
“Like I said last time, I’ll give it you for a discounted price of 69,800 Nars.”

Same as last time, huh?
He doesn’t seemt to be taking unfair advantage.

Sherry sighs when the merchant tells her the price.
And mumbles ‘same price, huh?’.
She puts the necklace back.

“Is there any other necklace like this one?”
“Like this one? Hmm… here, this one may not be exactly like that necklace but…”

The old man takes out another necklace.
A large amber jewel is hanging in the centre of the necklace.

“I see. This one is good, too.”
“This necklace boasts the Big Ball of Deep Crimson. It’s an amber that appears once in a fifty years. Therefore, unlike other necklaces, this necklace doesn’t contain more than one jewels. The price of this one is 65,000 Nars.”
“Un”

Sherry folds her arms and tilts her neck.
In the meantime, the old merchant puts the necklace in front of Miria and Roxanne.

“It’s beautiful.”
“Beautiful, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria thoughtlessly frolic.

“What do you say?”

Sherry holds the two necklaces in front of such Roxanne.

“Err… well…”
“I think this necklace with multiple jewels is better but its price…”
“I see. If you like it so much, I can reduce the price to 68,000 Nars.”

Seeing the troubled Sherry, the old merchant drops the price further.

“Un, more.”
“67,500 Nars. No less than this.”
“It can’t be helped any more than this. I think it’s good.”

When the merchant reduces the price, Sherry brings the necklace over to me.
She made him drop the price twice.
Such a formidable girl Sherry is.

“Got it.”
“I want another necklace within 50,000 Nars.”
“Very well. Here, how about these?”

The old man brings two necklaces.
He passes the necklaces to Sherry.

“This?”
“The necklace in your left hand has an amber jewel of fine quality. It has mild yet rich hue. The one in your other hand has an amber jewel with strong shine. Its quality is not much less than the other one. The left one is priced at 52,000 Nars while the price of the other one is 50,000 Nars.”
“I see. But there seems to be a hint of impurity in this one.”

After listening to the explanation of the merchant, Sherry compares the two and returns one.
It’s the necklace she was holding in her right hand.

“There are other necklaces, too. This necklace here is of fine quality but its price exceeds 56,000 Nars.”
“This is certainly good but there’s an instruction from the customer.”

Sherry holds the necklace for a moment but returns it to the merchant immediately after.
The old merchant is aware that we will resell the necklace.

“That’s right. Then how about this one? Its shine is strong yet its hue is harmonious. This one is priced at 54,500 Nars.”
“Seems good but the customer… un, what do you think?”
“Err… well…”
“Un, desu.”

Sherry approaches Roxanne and Miria for consultation.
This is useless, I think.
I don’t think these two are in a position to answer.

“Okay then, I can give it to you for a special price of 53,500 Nars. How about this?”
“Indeed… but… un”

Sherry tilts her neck.

“Then how about 53,000 Nars?”
“Don’t you think it’s a little high?”
“H-How about 52,500 Nars, then? No less than this.”
“I understand. It’s better now, I guess.”

Sherry passes the necklace, the price of which has been reduced to 52,500 Nars, to me.
Somehow, this seems to be the limit.
Sherry definitely has all the makings of a good broker.

“Then I’ll be buying these two necklaces.”
“Thank you very much. I had a good business today. This calls for a feast. Alright then, the total amount to pay for the two necklaces shall be 84,000 Nars.”

30% discount is effective, of course.
I will show no mercy.
I’m a bad guy.

I pay the money and receive a small wooden case as gift.
From Bode's adventurers' guild, I jump to Zabir's labyrinth.
I start hunting monsters under Roxanne's guidance.

"Now that I think about it, why did you ask for a necklace within 50,000 Nars? It's similar to the one we sold to the workshop owner's wife. And the one we sold to the owner's wife fetched 55,000 Nars."

When I take a breather after having recovered some MP, Sherry asks.

"Only an amateur would sell an item which costs 50,000 Nars for 50,000 Nars. A real merchant would sell a 50,000 Nars item for 55,000 Nars. Going by the same token, if I have to sell something for 55,000 Nars, I will keep the cost limited to 50,000 Nars."
"I see."

I'm a professional.
A professional consumer.

"Umm… that merchant first put the 50,000 Nars necklace in front for comparison. The necklace, however, was of inferior quality. It shows that the merchant was really cunning. Everyone would doubt whether the necklace really is worth 50,000 Nars or not. Thereafter, he took out 56,000 Nars necklace. Between the 50,000 Nars necklace and the 56,000 Nars necklace, everyone would choose the latter.

Such tactics were used during the negotiation, huh?
Sherry is reliable, after all.

"In Palmasque, will you be able to sell it for more than the cost?"
"Because I know the cost this time, it will be difficult. Because I know the cost, I will try my hardest during the bargaining to keep myself from going into red and the other party will notice it immediately. It will be possible if I do some preparations beforehand. However, we have already sold similar necklace to the owner's wife. Even if I'm prepared, if I try to sell it for more than the price last time, the owner's wife won't be as polite this time as she was last time."

It does seem difficult no matter how you look at it.
Oh well, I will entrust it to Sherry.

“Is that so? As expected of Sherry.”
“Not at all. Even after all that negotiation, I couldn’t make him lower the price by more than 500 Nars at a time. Later, however, he lowered it by about 30% without saying anything.”
“R-Really?”

After having noticed it on numerous occasions, Sherry seems to have caught on to the pattern of 30% discount.
Should I try shuffling it with 10% discount every now and then?

“It’s natural for such a person of virtue as Master.”
“Natural, desu.”
“It’s not virtue but yeah, such a thing is not out of place.”

I grab the straw provided to me by Roxanne.
I’m not sure if Miria understands what it’s about.
To escape from this situation, I jump to Palmasque.

“This time around, we may get late.”
“I understand.”

We won’t consign the necklace to the owner’s wife. Rather, we would have her introduce us to the prospective buyers and we would sell the necklace to them directly.
As Sherry said, it will require more time than the last time.

“We will be going then.”
“I’ll do my best.”
“Go, desu.”

I see the three of them off from Palmasque’s adventurers’ guild.
I head back to Quratar via Zabir’s labyrinth.
I engage in the boss battle of Quratar’s 3rd floor to recover my MP and replenish pepper.
With Durandal, I can take out Spice Spider by myself.

After the boss battle, I jump to the merchants’ guild.
I call for Luke the broker in the waiting room.

“Welcome. What brings you here today?”
“Actually, I’m not here to place order this time but to inquire something. If you don’t mind, that is.”
“Of course. Come with me, please.”

Luke comes over shortly after and leads me to the meeting room.
I take a seat and talk to Luke.

“Do you know about the auction held on the holidays?”
“Yes, I do.”
“I intend to participate in it.”
“It’s in five days time.”

So close already?
It’s right after I will be done with selling the mirrors.

“Because it’s my first time, I don’t know about the proceedings, so I want to learn the basics.”
“I see. How much do you know about the auction?”
“Just some rumors I heard from here and there.”

I have only seen some charity auctions on television and a few internet auctions.
I haven’t participated in one personally.
The auction in this world may not necessarily be the same.

“The proceedings start off with the seller setting the minimum bid. In case of successful bid, it is mandatory for the seller to sell at the bid price, so the seller has certain expectations of the bid. In case there’s no successful bid, the deposit is required to be forfeited as penalty. For that reason, in a way, the minimum bid becomes the price.
“So it has to be taken into account, huh?”
“The first buyer has to bid the price not less than the minimum bid. Subsequent buyers have a protocol to follow. Any bid subsequent to the first bid shall not be less than the prevailing bid. The denomination of increment in the bid shall be: 100 Nars in case the bid is less than 10,000 Nars; 1,000 Nars in case the bid is 10,000 Nars or more but less than 100,000 Nars; 10,000 Nars in case the bid is 100,000 Nars or more. If the denomination of increment in the bid is 10 times the bid, it’s not against the rules but it’s against the etiquette.

I was right to have asked him beforehand.
So, if a bid of 1,000,000 Nars suddenly pops up, it's against the etiquette?
I must be careful.
Other than that, it doesn't seem to be any different from the auctions I saw.

"Got it."
"I think you'll be good if you know this much. Later, you'll understand it better when you witness it in person."
"I really feel bad that I'm not placing any order. Talking about placing order, last time, there was a person who placed an order for Kobold Monster Card. Which weapon did he fuse it with for [MP Absorption] skill?"

Now that I have learned about the auction, I try to change the topic.

"I have no idea about him but [MP Absorption] skill is usually attached to a wand or a spear."
"Really?"
"Now that you mention it, I heard about a family in financial crisis the other day. It's Baradam family. To raise funds, they're exhibiting Holy Spear. If you intend to attach [MP Absorption] skill, you should go for it. That person must be aiming for it, too."

So it was Baradam family, after all.
I heard from Sherry that Holy Spear increases magic attack power.

"You can expect that weapon to be sold out immediately."
"If you fail, you can look for other weapons. Should you decide to switch to a different weapon, I can search for better weapons than Holy Spear."
"I see."
"Before engaging in bidding war, you should better evaluate if the price is high or not, in my opinion."

Although the raw material remains even if [Monster Card Fusion] fails, isn't it better to try it with another weapon?
What if it fails and the remade weapon is worse than the original?
That said, I don't think it will end up as failure now that we have been succeeding in a row.
The success of fusion is based on luck. If you can't identify empty skill slots via [Appraisal], that is.

Chapter 114 - Experience.

After hearing some information from Luke, I returned to the adventurers guild in Palmasque.
Three people meet me as soon as I arrive.
Each of them has a mirror.

Sherry has a smiling face.
The necklaces seem to have sold without any problems.

“Welcome back. It looks like things went well.”

Without listening to a reply, we returned to the house via Zabir’s labyrinth.
Sherry gives a report as I put the mirrors in the store room.

“First of all the bosses wife in Palmasque introduced us to the woman who was formally a representative on the council committee. She lives in a simple yet elegant mansion.”
“It was amazing.”
“It was big, desu.”
“After seeing the mansion, I thought I might be able to get 40 gold coins, but it didn’t work out. As a special price for being introduced by the bosses wife we accepted 38 gold coins.”

Originally the plan was for 35 gold coins, but you got 38.
As expected of Sherry.
Additionally she gained favor with the bosses wife, she’s quite shrewd.

“Well done.”
“The second was sold to the bosses wives friend for 25 gold coins as promised. Everything went well, and both of them were pleased. I told the bosses wife this one was a little smaller, and it went perfectly.”

Even if they are friends, will the friend be happy with a slightly smaller necklace?
It seems complicated.

“That’s good. You’ve done well.”
“Thank you.”

I received 63 gold coins, and 20 silver coins from Sherry.
The silver coins are the price of the small boxes.
She seems to have sold them without mercy.

I have made a great deal of profit with this.
I don’t need to rely on the white crystal anymore.

“It happened when I stopped worrying about it?”

After hunting the following morning, I checked the rucksack when we had a break at noon.
Light will be followed by shadows.
No, this isn’t something bad.
But, bad things might happen in the future so I should be prepared.

“What happened?”
“Do you want to see it?”

I pulled out the magic crystal which had turned white, and showed it to Roxanne.
The white magic crystal.
It’s finally been completed.

“It’s amazing. As expected of Master.”
“It’s the first time I’ve seen one.”
“As expected, desu.”

This will be really good.
If anyone extremely good shows up in the auction I will be prepared.

“I’ll go and sell it in the guild this evening.”
“Um, yes.”

Roxanne looks puzzled.
The three of them don’t understand what happened.
Sherry, I want you to stop looking at me with suspicious eyes.

In the evening I went to Quratar's explorers guild to sell.
Quratar's explorers guild is the largest, and that's part of my plan.
The evening is the busiest time.

I put the white crystal and the yellow crystal on the tray with all the items I collected.
I add to that the nourishment medicine and strengthening medicine I had in my item box.
Selling the white crystal and yellow crystal together will give a 30% bonus.
[30% increased sale price] works when selling in the guild.

There is a white gold coin that has the value of 100 gold coins in this world.
I haven't seen one.
A white magic crystal is worth one million nars. A white gold coin.
If I sell a white magic crystal, I might receive a white gold coin.

If I sell the white magic crystal with something and get the 30% bonus, 30 gold coins will come back with the white gold coin, instead of just the white gold coin on it's own like normal.
The staff of the guild might think it is strange.

If I sell a white crystal with a yellow crystal it would be 1 white gold coin with 43 gold coins.
It might still be noticeable like this.
I need to sell enough other items to conceal the bonus.

I wait in front of the counter.
The female receptionist returns with money on a tray.
She doesn't appear to be suspicious.

There is one white gold coin.
It has an appearance similar to a silver coin.
It's amazing for a gold coin.
The size is also different, and you can notice it's not a silver coin straight away.

This is a white gold coin?
I feel like I suddenly became rich.
Well, actually I did.

I quickly put the white gold coin and the gold coins in my item box.
The remaining silver coins and copper coins I slide into my rucksack, and then leave the explorers guild in a hurry.
I went to the adventurers guild at a quick pace.
I'm behaving suspiciously because I'm not used to having so much money.

"I don't think anyone is coming."
"Right. I think it's fine."

As I entered the adventurers guild I kept checking outside to see if I was being followed.
Even I dislike how timid I'm being.
It doesn't look like anyone is following me at the moment.

"Should I do some shopping before I go back?"

There is no known magic or skills to steal items from someone elses item box.
There shouldn't be any problems.
I can go back after shopping.

"Master, there is a message from Luke. He seems to have made a successful bid for a green caterpillar's monster card."

When I return to the house, there is a message from Luke waiting.
Roxanne reads the message.
It's the green caterpillars monster card?
A spare sacrificial misanga can be made with it.

The next morning I sold a mirror, then headed to the merchants guild after breakfast.
I asked Roxanne to handle the washing and cleaning up.
I'm a little sorry because I haven't been making the breakfast lately.
Though, I'm preparing the water used for the washing and cleaning.

I called for Luke the broker, and we went to the conference room.

"Yesterday after making a successful bid for the green caterpillars monster card, I also made a successful bid of 5,000 nars on a kobold monster card."

Luke pulls out two monster cards.
I checked them, and they really are a kobold and green caterpillar monster cards.

“That’s great.”
“This one’s the kobold monster card. Since the holiday is close, the amount being exhibited might increase a bit.”
“I see.”

Is there more spending during holidays?
Are they making money to prepare for the auction?
Crap.
The amount of rivals is increasing.

“Debt repayments are due at the end of the season.”

Is that the same as the story where people sold their items on new years eve in the edo period?
Since there is no end of month in this world, it’s the end of the season?

“Oh. So this one is the green caterpillar then.”

I confirm it out loud, and put the monster cards in my item box.
It doesn’t make any difference to me since I checked them with [Analyze] anyway.
I handle them carefully.
Someone who can’t use [Analyze] would handle them carefully.

I paid the price, and 700 nars commission for the monster cards.
I might be taken advantage of if I order the same thing over and over, so I didn’t order another kobold monster card this time.
The harem might increase because of the auction, so I didn’t cancel the order for green caterpillar monster cards.

“To repay their debt at the end of the season, the fallen Baradam family will be exhibiting a Sacred Spear today.”
“There’s am exhibition today?”
“Yes. The information about the Sacred Spear being exhibited has probably been spread to increase sales on kobold monster cards. They want to lure in more bidders.”

I could put [MP absorption] on a Sacred Spear.

“Is it possible to see the exhibition of the Sacred Spear?”
“Well… it’s not impossible.”

Luke hesitated.

“Is there a problem?”
“There’s a story. Can you keep it to yourself?”
“I understand.”
“The Baradam house seem to have brought the Sacred Spear to the brokers first, but the price offered was too cheap so they switched to an exhibition. The brokers have decided not to bid, except on orders of kobold monster cards.”

Luke exposes it.
Nobody will bid on it.
The successful bid will be a low price.

I already knew that brokers were nasty.
It wouldn’t be good to make them angry.
Maybe it’s a warning from Luke to me.
That this will happen to me if I do something selfish.

“Then, the first lowest bid will be a successful bid.”
“That’s right. Or if the starting bid is too high we might call everything off.”

Isn’t there a deposit they’d lose?
I’m interested in the Sacred Spear, but I probably shouldn’t go for this one.
It would be bad if I opposed the brokers.
The bid price might jump up if there’s a bidding war with a guest that wants to put [MP absorption] on it.

“I won’t bid on it. I just want to watch.”

I give Luke some reassurance.

But, what if the story that they were refusing to bid was made up?
If there is an item you want by any means possible you could spread a rumour about refusing to bid, so you get a cheap price.

It wouldn't work if there are people aside from the brokers at the exhibition.

It would be cheating.
Have stories come out about such things?
Aren't there brokers who commit fraud?

"Okay. You can come to the auction hall and watch. There is a registration fee that needs to be paid when you enter, though that is refunded if you participate in bidding. However, do not participate in bidding on the Sacred Spear."
"So I can come?"
"Yes."
"Thanks for doing this."

We go to the hall.
It will be good to experience this today before the holiday's auction.

"I think the Sacred Spear will be shown in 20-30 minutes."

I still seem to have some time on my hands.
I returned to the house briefly, and told Roxanne I'd be a bit late.
I turned around and went straight back to the merchants guild.
It only took a few seconds to travel because I was using [Warp].

I climbed the stairs to the second floor of the merchants guild.
A large conference room is on the second floor.
The auction seems to be held there.

"It's here?"
"Yes."

Luke leads me inside.
It's a considerably spacious room.
There is a stage at the front, and chairs facing it.
It feels like a small theater.

I sit down next to Luke.
There aren't many people in the room.

Maybe 20-30?
Hundreds of people could fit if it was full.

“Then, I’ll start the auction. The first item today is the pig monster card. It’s been confirmed by the guild.”

A man stood at the left side of the stage.
Another man entered, and put the card on the table at the center of the stage.
The pig monster card.
He must be the seller.

“If it is cheap I will make a bid for it. You can too. We will lose our registration fee if we don’t bid.”

Luke whispers in my ear.

“The starting bid is 1,000 nars.”
“1,000.”

As soon as the man on the left side of the stage indicated, someone called out at once.

“1,100.”
“1,200.”
“1,300.”

The bidding increments are 100 nars because it is less than 10,000 nars.

“Since it’s the first item shown, it has 100 nar increments so a lot of people can participate.”
“Oh.”
“1,400.”
“1,500.”

The auction progresses.

“1,600.”

I raised my voice boldly.

“1,700”

Luke calls out next.
Are you looking out for me?

A person in charge comes straight over, and passes a slip of paper to Luke & I.
It’s papyrus.
Something is written on it.

“What’s this?”
“You can turn this in when you leave the hall as proof that you participated and get your registration fee returned.”

I see.
It’s proof of participation.

The bid price kept increasing by 100 nars.
When it got to 2,500 the bids started slowing in speed.

“2,800. The current bid is 2,800. Are there any more?”
“2,900.”
“3,000.”
“As I thought, it’s gotten a little higher.”

Luke mutters as he watches the auction.

“3,100.”

Someone calls out again, but then it goes quiet.

“3,100. The current price is 3,100. Are there any more bids? … No… The successful bid is 3,100 nars. The seller and the bidder, please make the exchange in the back room and perform confirmation on the item.”

The successful bidder has been decided.
The seller who appeared on stage leaves with the monster card, and the bidder also leaves through a door at the front right.

“This is an auction?”

There isn't really any difference with auctions on Earth.
Since the purpose is the same, they turned out similar.

"The next item today is the coral monster card. It's been confirmed by the guild. The starting bid is 1,000 nars."

The next seller shows up and puts a monster card on the table.
The price increases in 100's from 1000 nars again, and then at last it finishes.
This repeats several times.

"All the people in the hall have probably participated now, so the bidding gets serious from here."

Luke whispers.
Bids increase by 10% for the starting range of 1,000 nars.
There wasn't anyone that raised a bid by 1,000 nars, but there were plenty of people that raised by 100 nars.

"The next item shown is the Sacred Spear. Since it is a piece of equipment, the guild has not confirmed it, so please be careful."

The Sacred Spear is finally here?
The seller appears at the chairman's introduction.
The seller does not have a family name.

It doesn't seem to have been brought by someone from the Baradam house.
A substitute has come to sell it.
Is it a servant or a butler?
The seller puts the Sacred Spear on the table.

Sacred Spear: Skills [Empty] [Empty] [Empty] [Empty] [Empty]

"Oh!"

I called out by accident.

Chapter 115 - The Condition

After seeing the Sacred Spear at the auction, I subconsciously uttered a cry.
I did so because the weapon had 5 empty skill slots.

Amazing, amazing, amazing!
This Sacred Spear holds 5 empty skill slots.
It is quite spectacular to see this number of skill slots.

I was not prepared for something like this to be exhibited.
As expected of an auction, there is a higher probability of seeing items with multiple empty skill slots here.
No, this hypothesis might be wrong.
As I am the only one with the [Appraisal] skill, only I can see the skill slots and not be deceived.

“Well then, to start the bidding of the Sacred Spear, the minimum bid price is 150,000 Nars. Please, let’s start.”

The auction is starting.
The minimum bid price is 150,000 Nars.
Is this expensive or not?
A subtle air is flowing through the hall.

As time passed, the atmosphere became heavier.
Not everyone can afford to bid here.
It was natural for other brokers not to have a go, but even the broker who bought the Kobold Monster Card didn’t try to bid.

“Is the price high?”

I asked Luke.
If it is too expensive, there is a possibility that it won’t find a buyer.
If nobody bids, I’ll go for it.
It seems that the brokers all agree not to compete for it, but is it okay if no one buys it?

“I don’t think so.”

Luke was negative.

“150,000 Nars. Someone?”
“150,000”

As the seller’s expression changes, the auction officer looks to confirm the bidder.
Was the strategy to bid at the very last minute?
It’s normal to jump at such a bargain price. That no broker actually went for it is weird.
It would be a different story if it were an expensive item.
The seller displays an expression of relief.
Nobody follows up on the bid.
As it stands, it will be sold at this price.
150,000 Nars might really be a low price.
I want to raise my hand so much but I endure it.
I can not antagonize all these brokers.

“150,000 once, 150,000 twice. Nobody else…? Then… the Sacred Spear goes to the bidder with the bid of 150,000 Nars.”

Hence, the 150,000 Nars bid was declared the winning bid for the Sacred Spear.
The seller dropped his shoulders in disappointment due to the low selling price.

“Which one is more expensive, Sacred Spear or a staff with [MP Absorption] skill?”

I made sure that the person collecting the Sacred Spear went to the backstage and asked Luke in a low voice.
Assuming that the fusion of a monster card succeeds once out of ten times; adding the price of ten Kobold Monster Cards and Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Cards, and the price of the staff; shouldn’t a staff with [MP Absorption] skill cost about 150,000 Nars?

“In any other case, a Sacred Spear would fetch more, of course.”
“What about this Sacred Spear?”
“Considering its price, 150,000 Nars, a staff with [MP Absorption] skill

would cost more."
"Is that so? I need a favor from you, then."

150,000 Nars is a fairly low price, after all.
Then, after having made up my mind, I approach Luke.

"What?"
"I'd like to propose an exchange to the successful bidder of the Sacred Spear. The Sacred Spear vis-a-vis a staff with [MP Absorption] skill."
"No way! Do you have it?"
"I can arrange one."

I already have a Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, a Kobold Monster Card, and a staff with an empty skill slot;
So it is possible to make a staff with [MP Absorption] skill.
The Sacred Spear is now being replaced by the next item of the auction.
Ah, I should have bid.
It's too late now. I can only remember the sweet embrace of my mother's arm.

"I understand."
"I would like to exchange an [MP Absorption] weapon for the Sacred Spear. As the spear's price was low, there might be some room for profit. I entrust the negotiation with the other party to you, Luke. You can take the commission from the difference."

The Sacred Spear went for a low price.
Hence, Luke could come up with the offer of a staff with [MP Absorption] skill plus 10,000 Nars in exchange for the Sacred Spear.
I leave the details of the deal to Luke's discretion.
He would not go for it if he can't make any profit out of it.

"Are you fine with it?"
"Whether you can get any money out of the deal or not depends entirely on your skill. I would rather go with the one-to-one exchange."
"I see. Although the Sacred Spear is a good weapon, this time, it went for less. As a wand, staff is adequate. Now, if you absolutely want a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill, would you choose a staff with [MP Absorption] skill or a Sacred Spear, the fusion in which case may or may not be successful…?"

Luke calculates the prospects while muttering.
If the goal of the bidder is not the Sacred Spear but a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill, he will agree to this deal.
As a matter of fact, they would be able to get a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill if they try since the Sacred Spear has empty skill slots.
Well, the other party doesn't know that, so they should not decline the deal.

"How about it?
"Certainly. Let's talk later, then. The successful bidder is also a broker. Because it is necessary for him to report it to his customer, I don't expect a quick answer."
"Contact me if there's a reply. For now, I will return home. This auction served as a good experience. Thank you for today."
"Same here. Thank you very much."

I parted with Luke and got out of the auction hall.
At the reception desk, I submitted the papyrus, the proof of my participation in the bidding, and left.
I arrived at home from the living room's wall.

"I am back."
"Did something bad happen? It took you quite some time."
"No, don't worry about it."

I have spent an unexpectedly long time in the merchants' guild, but I quickly psyche myself up as I enter the labyrinth.
We went hunting on Haruba's 17th floor.
The exploration progressed quite smoothly.
The monsters we encountered the most on 17th floor were Kettle Mermaids paired up with Clamshells, that are both weak against earth magic.
Hence, this level can be classified as easy.
It is not as easy as Quratar's 16th floor, though.

Since I had already obtained a white crystal, there was no need for [Crystalization] skill, so I was able to reset the bonus points.
I allocated the points toward [Increase in Gained Experience] skill, obviously.
Thanks to that, Roxanne finally leveled up to Warrior Lv30.

I check Roxanne's jobs via [Party Job Settings].
Roxanne has acquired the Knight job.

As expected, Warrior Lv30 seems to be the condition to acquire Knight job.
That's great.

Warrior Lv30, Beast Warrior Lv32, Village Chief Lv1, Monk Lv2, Villager Lv8, Farmer Lv1, Swordsman Lv1, Explorer Lv1, Herbalist Lv1, Merchant Lv1, Assassin Lv1, Knight Lv1.

What is this frightful job called Assassin?
I've never seen it before.
When did Roxanne get involved in assassination?
Actually, It might not be farfetched if it is Roxanne.
Many warriors seem to have already died at her hands.
Roxanne is a scary girl.

"Umm, what is it?"

No, wait.
It was also assassination when I killed those thieves.
For Roxanne to become an assassin now, it might be that Warrior Lv30 is required like in case of Knight.
That said, because I am a Warrior Lv30, too, assassination does not seem to be the condition to acquire this job.

"Let's go home and rest."
"Yes, certainly."

I dodged the question and return home at once.
What is the condition to acquire Assassin job?
Before that, I should immediately get the Village Chief job.
I take all the contents out of my Item Box.

"Is there something wrong ?"

Sherry asks me with cold eyes.
No, it's not her eyes that are cold.
It's I who's being paranoid.

“A little experiment. Does Sherry want to take part as well?”
“Then I have to take all the items out of my Item Box, too?”

Sherry accepted quickly.
Is it okay for her to accept so readily?
She’s still giving me those cold eyes.
I should distract her or she‘ll be even more suspicious of what is coming next.

“Wait a moment.”

I remember that I have a Caterpillar Monster Card and a Misanga.
It is one of the Misangas Sherry made and I kept it because it had an empty skill slot.

I take it out from my Item Box and pass it along with the monster card to Sherry.

“You want me to fuse it?”
“Please do. Well then, Roxanne, face me and say Appointment.”
“Appointment?”
“Yes.”

I asked Roxanne to say that after I had changed her job to Knight Lv1, of course.
Making her do it will be quicker than explaining it.
An incantation should float up inside Roxanne’s head after saying Appointment.

“Appointment… What?”

The expression on Roxanne’s face changed.
It seems to have gone well.

“This is a knight’s skill. Roxanne is a knight now.”
“Err… am I a knight?”
“This skill allows a knight to appoint someone as a village’s chief.”

Addressing the confused Roxanne, Sherry who had successfully fused the monster card, handed the Sacrificial Misanga over to me.
As expected, Sherry seems to know about the [Apointment] skill.

“Is that so? Thank you. As expected of Sherry.”
“I thought that to become a knight, one needed many years of training as a warrior. But Roxanne has been a warrior only for a short period of time.”
“As expected of Master.”
“Master, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria overwhelmed the skeptical Sherry.
Sherry looks at me with doubtful eyes.

“No, that must be so because it’s Roxanne.”
“Indeed, if it’s Roxanne.”

She agreed on that.
I can understand why.

“As expected of Onee-chan, desu.”
“Umm, do you want me to appoint you, Master?”
“Please do.”
“Rule of the emperor who rules the world?…”

Roxanne tried the incantation.
It didn’t work.
There seems to be a problem with Brahim words.

“I’ll try it first, so listen well.”
“Okay, understood.”
“The emperor who rules the heaven and the earth, let them reign without resistance — Appointment.”

I was facing Sherry while I recited the incantation of the [Appointment] skill out loud.
Since I had cancelled [Incantation Omission] skill before selecting the Knight job, i was able to see the incantation.
Sherry’s job is now Village Chief Lv1.

“As expected of Master. I will try to repeat the incantation now.”

Roxanne recited the incantation while facing me.
When I checked, my first job was Village Chief Lv1.
Just like I thought, [Appointment] takes the first job's place.
In case you have Explorer as your first job, your Item Box needs to be empty. I was right to have emptied it.

"Oh, well done, Roxanne."
"Thank you very much."
"Err… it should be prohibited for a knight to appoint a village's chief without permission. Did I become a village chief, too ?"

Sherry interrupts.
Prohibited, huh?
Sounds logical.
If everybody appointed a village chief at their own discretion, it would cause chaos.

"No, not anymore."

I had already switched her job back to Master Smith.

"It's alright. It's a secret, so no one will be able to find out. Okay, Miria?"
"Secret, desu."

Well, nobody will find out as long as I don't select it as my first job.
I am not even sure about selecting it at all as it doesn't seem to be useful in combat.
Because it's a useless job, is that why any knight can appoint someone as a village's chief, perhaps?

"Well, that's that, but…"
"Sherry, do you know about the Assassin job?"

I asked the bored Sherry.
Assassin seems to be more useful than Village Chief.

"It is a pretty unusual job. If I remember correctly, it deals with poison. It is said that assassins fight with a weapon imbued with poison."

Poison, huh?
True, Roxanne has indeed killed many using poison already.
I have yet to use poison.
If poison is the condition, it is a given that I don't have the Assassin job even though I am a Warrior Lv30.
I checked the Assassin's job effects through [Party Job Settings].

Assassin Lv1
Effects | Small Increase in Intelligence | Small Increase in Spirit
Skills | Increased Chance of Inflicting Abnormal Status | Resistance against Abnormal Status

Since the job is related to abnormal status, poison really seems to be the condition of acquiring it.
It also gives two effects, both of which grant small increase in interesting stats.
Are Intelligence and Spirit the stats that are affected by abnormal status?

Intelligence is related to magic, too.
I have already tested that my magic attack power increases with the increase in Intelligence.
That's great.
Since it also profits other party members, it is quite useful.
This [Resistance to Abnormal Status] skill looks really interesting.
It has two skills related to abnormal status. One is [Resistance to Abnormal Status]. Is the second skill, [Increased Chance of Inflicting Abnormal Status], related to attack?
You might need to use poison with your weapon for this skill to be of any use, though.
[Resistance to Abnormal Status] might become useless if we get some equipment with similar resistance.
We already have a hard leather hat that provides protection against poison.
It's quite a useful job nonetheless. I should try to acquire it.

"That's good. Let's do an experiment."
"Umm, what experiment?"
"The experiment is killing a monster using poison. Sherry, the monster native to Haruba's 10th floor was NT Ant, right?"
"That's right."

I put all the items I took out back in my Item Box and head to Haruba's 10th floor.

Kaga Michio | Male | 17 years old
Explorer Lv43 | Hero Lv40 | Wizard Lv42| Monk Lv42 | Alchemist Lv33
Equipment | Rod of Offerings | Hard Leather Hat | Alba | Dragon Leather Gloves | Dragon Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | Female | 16 years old
Knight Lv1
Equipment | Estoc | Steel Shield | Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Dragon Leather Jacket | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes of Willow | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | Female | 16 years old
Master Smith Lv33
Equipment | Steel Spear of Authority | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail |
Water Resistant Leather Mittens | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Miria | Female | 15 years old
Diver Lv32
Equipment | Rapier | Iron Shield | Strengthened Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail |
Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne's job is now Knight Lv1.
It won't affect her much, though, as she rarely gets hit.
This time, we won't be using the increased resistance to abnormal status given by the Assassin job.
I expect the battles to be drawn out, so the Alchemist job is needed.

"Because you only just became a knight, Roxanne, be careful. Well then, guide us to a place with a lot of NT Ants, please."
"Understood."

Well, it's needless to tell Roxanne to be cautious.
We hunt NT Ants and collect the poison stingers.

“Can we really kill NT Ants using their own poison?”
“Of course.”
“Absolutely.”

Apparently, the NT Ants’ poison will work on them.
Since the experienced Roxanne and Sherry are the ones saying so, it should work.
Because NT Ants have a skill attack, I need to avoid a drawn out battle.
If it becomes too troublesome, we’ll retreat to a lower level to rest.

I have no idea as to how many stingers I need to shoot in order to poison an NT Ant.
On Haruba’s 10th floor, there are Escape Goats, too, which is not particularly good as it will run away the moment the poison damage exceeds a certain limit.
NT Ant is a better experimental subject.

When we were collecting the stingers, I was able to take out NT Ants with just one shot of water magic.
I don’t think it would be possible to take them out with one shot even if it were weak against water magic.
I seem to have become stronger over time.

Chapter 116 - Assassin

“Well then, let’s get the experiment started. Roxanne has it already, so I’ll be the one to shoot the poison stingers. You three won’t be attacking.”

I have about twenty poison stingers.
Shooting a poison stinger doesn’t necessarily inflict poison but with this many, there shouldn’t be any problem.

“If it constructs magic formation, what should I do?”
“If that happens, thrust your spear.”

I answer Sherry’s question.

“If you dodge NT Ant’s skill attack, you won’t get poisoned.”

Yeah, if I were Roxanne.
I look toward Sherry and nod. She acknowledges it.

When a group of three NT Ants enters my line of sight, I cast [Waterstorm].
Two of them drop down immediately. One’s still standing.
I wait for an opportunity to shoot a poison stinger at the surviving NT Ant.

Back then, Roxanne perhaps didn’t poison the monster with the finishing blow. It was probably taken out by getting poisoned at the beginning.
If I take a monster out by poisoning it at the end, it’s likely that I won’t acquire Assassin.
Still, there’s no harm in trying it.

If you finish a monster off with bare hands, you acquire Monk.
There’s a possibility that it’s same in case of Assassin, too.
No matter how you look at it, taking a monster out by poisoning it at the start is difficult.

Roxanne holds her shield and stands in front of the NT Ant.
Ah, if Roxanne can keep it company, there won't be any need for Sherry to cancel its skill attack.
I look at Sherry and signal her to not use the spear. She acknowledges it.
However, if Roxanne keeps it company, there's a possibility that it won't be considered as 'taking a monster out by poisoning it at the start'.

"Now that I think about it, how do I know that the poison has been inflicted successfully?"
"When a monster gets poisoned, its color pales a bit."

While shooting a poison stinger, I ask Sherry. Roxanne dodges an attack of the NT Ant.
Is it even possible to notice the change in color of a monster in this dark labyrinth?
Did it fail?

"Poison, desu."

When I shoot the poison stinger, Miria shouts.
At the same time, the NT Ant collapses.

"Did its color change?"
"Yes, desu."

Miria seemed to have noticed it.
I don't get it.
The NT Ant collapsed immediately. Did its HP become zero with the first poison attack?
This is most likely so because I had already whittled its HP down with a magic attack.

I open [Job Settings] interface and check my jobs out.
I have successfully acquired Assassin Lv1.
Inflicting poison with the finishing blow seems to be acceptable.

"Well then, next will be Sherry."
"Understood."

I have Sherry follow suit.
The NT Ant I just took out dropped a poison stinger, of course.
So our stock of poison stingers has been replenished immediately.

The next group comprises two NT Ants and an Escape Goat.
After drawing them close, I cast [Waterstorm].
Both the NT Ants drop down. The Escape Goat is still standing.

Damn it!
Both the ants are dead.
I chase the Escape Goat with a [Waterball].
It collapses in two spells.

We got to increase the stock, at least. We proceed to the next location.
The next group comprises two NT Ants.
I take one of them out with a water spell.

“Spear.”
“Okay.”

I receive the spear from Sherry and hand her the poison stingers.
Sherry slants a bit from behind Roxanne and shoots a poison stinger at the ant.
While Roxanne lightly wards off the NT Ant’s attack, Sherry shoots another poison stinger.

“Here it comes.”

Right after she announces that, Roxanne hurtles back.
Sherry and I, who were standing behind her respectively with the poison stingers and the spear, immediately withdraw.

Woah!
Even though it had its back toward us, it was so quick, it felt like it had an eye on its back.

I rush back.
When I had covered about five meters, I looked behind to find Sherry and Miria in tow.
Roxanne, however, had stopped midway.

Roxanne didn't fall back all the way.
She probably knew from her experience.
I go back to Roxanne.
The NT Ant had already collapsed.

"Did it get poisoned?"
"Yes, desu. Last shot, desu."

Sherry seemed to have inflicted poison with the poison stinger she shot last.
Because she doesn't have Warrior Lv30, she can't acquire Assassin.
The only problem is that I'm unable to confirm the status but it can't be helped.

"I was of the idea that its skill attack can't be dodged. How did you do it?"
"It was rather a feat than an evasive maneuver."

I return the spear to Sherry.
Constructing a magic formation requires time.
During that time, you can get out of the range of its attack. Is that what she means?
It surely can't be called an evasive maneuver.

But it will be difficult to accomplish for anyone other than Roxanne.
I was able to escape successfully because I was in the back to begin with.

"As expected of Onee-chan, desu. Well done, desu."

For Roxanne to not give up, this positivity of Miria may be needed.

"Err… its skill attack can be avoided. Sherry and Miria can do it, too."

Can they, really?
In Roxanne's dictionary of evasion, there's no such word as impossible.
I unintentionally look toward Sherry.

"M-Mira is next."
"Yes, desu."

Because there still are more than ten poison stingers left and two more have just been recovered, I decide to carry on.

The next group comprises four NT Ants.
Only one of them will be spared.

I cast [Waterstorm].
Two of them collapse immediately.
I launch [Waterball] at one of the remaining two.

Roxanne steps forward and blocks the last one.
Miria shoots a poison stinger from behind Roxanne.
I'm standing behind Miria, holding the poison stingers.

"Here."

Miria turns the upper half of her body and receives another poison stinger from me.
It's to allow us to run away if needs be.
Roxanne easily sidesteps the charge of the NT Ant.

"Poison, desu."

When I try to hand her one more poison stinger, she stops me.
Do they become prone to poison after constructing a magic formation?
Roxanne receives the charge of the NT Ant with her shield.

I wonder if its color has changed.
I can't notice any change.
Has it paled?

Roxanne lightly dodges the next attack of the ant.
The ant collapses.
It did get poisoned, it seems.

Now, all the members of our party can acquire Assassin.
Because Miria is a vanguard, it will probably be of use to her.
Once her set of equipment is complete, I will have her become an assassin.

After the experiment was over, we continued to hunt on Haruba's 17th floor until we returned home in the evening.
When we arrive at home, we find Luke's message at the entrance.

“Master, there’s a message from Luke. He asks of you to visit him as soon as possible.”

It’s most likely related to the Sacred Spear.
I wonder if there’s a response of some sort.
I think it’s too early, though, for the buyer’s broker to contact us.
I shouldn’t make fun of someone else’s broker or it may anger them.

…
I don’t want to go but if it’s about what I think it’s about, there’s no other choice.
Because he asked of me to visit him as soon as possible, I decide to go meet to him immediately.

“Well then, I’ll be leaving for the merchants’ guild.”
“Okay. Take care.”

I jump to the waiting room of the merchants’ guild.
Luke comes over immediately after I called for him.

There’s one more person with him.
Weapons Merchant Lv8.
He appears to belong to a well-off family.
He has this air of nobility about him.

Is he here to appraise the staff with [MP Absorption] skill?
But I didn’t bring it.
In fact, I haven’t even made it yet.

“Ah, I have been waiting for you. Would you please come with me?”
“I understand.”

We head to the meeting room.
I take a seat. Luke sits across from me. The man takes a seat next to Luke.

“This is the broker I talked to you about.”
“Is it true that you have a staff with [MP Absorption] skill?”

The man cuts to the chase right after the greetings.
Is he the broker who made the successful bid for the Sacred Spear?
I couldn't see him properly during the auction.

Why is he in such a hurry to call me so urgently?
Why did he have to go to this extent?

"It's true."
"Well then, you must know the name of the weapon with [MP Absorption] skill, right?"

The man questions my integrity.
When you attach [2x Increase in Intelligence] skill to a rod, it becomes the Rod of Offerings. When you attach [Incantation Delay] skill to a copper sword, it becomes the Copper Sword of Obstruction. There's a predefined naming scheme.
There must be one for [MP Absorption] skill, too.
I don't know, obviously, because I haven't made it yet.

Am I supposed to know it's name if I have it?
Am I, really?
For example, the Duke of Harz's Ring of Determination. It's his family's heirloom, passed down from generation to generation.
It won't be unusual if he doesn't know its name.

"Because I made it myself, I don't know its name. Even though I don't know, if there's a trusted weapons merchant around, there won't be any problem."

I tell him honestly that I don't know.
Actually, no. I haven't made it yet but this weapons merchant doesn't know that.
I'm not honest at all.

Also, I can't say that it's an heirloom because it won't look old from any angle.
Furthermore, he may use this fact to bargain the price down.
Even if I will later be required to show it, I will be able to claim that it's new because I have already told them that I made it myself.

"Very well. Then, why would you let go of such a precious weapon that you made after taking great pains?"

If I say that I don't need it, I will be giving him an even bigger reason to bargain the price down.

If I made it myself, why would I let go of it? Problem.
If it's an heirloom, it must be old. Problem.
If I stole it, I must know its name.
Therefore, if I know its name, it will be suspected to be a stolen item. Problem.

It seemed like a simple question at first but it's actually quite a tricky one.
As you would expect from a broker.
Cunning.

"I have a shrine maiden in my party who can use spear. In strengthening her, the Sacred Spear will be considerably helpful. It's an opportunity I stumbled upon after taking great pains."
"I see. Do you have the staff with you?"
"I don't."

I seem to have deceived him successfully.

"I want to have it immediately. Is it possible?"
"I can bring it right now but have you received the approval from your client?"
"To tell you the truth, who needs a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill is my own house. It has been decided for the heir of the main house to receive his mistress."
"That's great."

So the broker's client is actually the broker's own house, huh?
Well, there's no need for approval, then.
If he's part-broker part-client,
Then he must have been entrusted with the procurement task.

"It has been decided for a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill to be presented at the marriage ceremony. The task was commissioned to an acquainted master smith. However, there has been no success. Although the Sacred Spear is an excellent weapon, if I can get the staff with [MP Absorption] skill in its exchange, it'll be a good deal. After it has been appraised, I'm willing to exchange the weapons at your terms."

So the staff with [MP Absorption] skill will be used as a betrothal gift, huh?
Because it has to be arranged before the marriage, he would definitely like to have it as quickly as possible.
I leave my seat.

“I understand. I’ll bring it right away.”
“Please.”

I head back to the waiting room to use [Warp].
It’s annoying of them to follow along to see me off.
I prefer to use [Warp] in peace when no one’s around.
I read the incantation of [Field Walk] out loud and use [Warp].

“Sherry, fuse this, please.”

After taking the items out, I call out to Sherry who was preparing dinner.
If it’s Sherry, the [Monster Card Fusion] will be easy as pie.
Before dinner.
I put the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, the Kobold Monster Card and the staff with an empty skill slot on the table.

“Are you sure about the cards?”
“It’s fine.”
“If the fusion fails, you won’t get the cards back.”

I was of the idea that she no longer feels uneasy about [Monster Card Fusion] but it doesn’t seem to be the case.
Even the limitless sand may vanish from a beach but worries will not. (TN: Hama no massago, a Japanese proverb which means that the grains of sand on a beach are innumerable.)

“You’re onboard a large ship, Sherry, don’t worry.” (TN: Oobune ni notta you, another Japanese proverb which means that you’re safe.)
“I have been doing it casually until now but…”
“You don’t need to tell me. My memory isn’t shabby.”
“…”

As long as she doesn’t lose her focus due to her doubts, there’s no problem.
Sherry takes a seat and reluctantly picks the staff up in her hands.
She performs the [Monster Card Fusion].

“Ooh, it’s a success. As expected of Sherry- no, as expected of my memory.”

It doesn’t mean that my memory was used.
So, don’t look at me with questioning eyes.

Or was my memory actually used, perhaps?

I used it.
I definitely used it.
If my memory serves me right, I used my memory.

“Thank you very much. It’s possible, though, that a different skill has been attached.”

Still doubting, huh?
Had Roxanne praised her in my stead, it would have been a different case, I’m certain.
Unfortunately, she’s in the kitchen, not here.

I praise her myself because there’s no other option, and receive the wand from Sherry.
[MP Absorption] skill has successfully been attached to the staff.
Soul Sucker Staff, huh?
Quite an exaggerated name.

Chapter 117 - Memory

I returned to the merchants guild with the Soul Sucker Staff.
Two brokers were waiting in the waiting room.
They look relieved when they see me holding the cane.

Were they worried that I wouldn't come back?
You can see that they were concerned.

It took a little time since I had to get Sherry to fuse it.
They might have thought I ran away because I didn't have the staff with [MP absorption] prepared.
I've got Sherry so it's fine, you don't need to think anything bad about me.

"Sorry, it took me a little time to find it."
"Let's go back to the room."

We entered the conference room, and I passed the Soul Sucking Staff to the weapons merchant.
He recites the incantation of weapon analysis.

"This certainly is a Soul Sucking Staff. There's no doubt."
"Oh."

There can't be any doubt.

"The name of a weapon with [MP absorption] becomes Soul Sucking."
"Soul Sucking? I'll remember it. I have a good memory."
"It's in good condition too, not even a scratch. There's nothing to hinder our business, so here."

The man recites another incantation and opens his item box.
He takes the Sacred Spear out.
I can see the five empty skill slots.
They haven't swapped it.

“How shall I confirm the Sacred Spear? I don’t want to risk a counterfeit item since I am a broker. I can call an acquaintance weapons merchant if that suits you?”

Luke makes a suggestion.
I know that it’s the Sacred Spear because of [Analyze], but normally someone wouldn’t know.
Do I have to confirm it?
There is a weapons merchant here, but he’s on the sellers side.

Can an acquaintance of Luke be trusted?
The acquaintance might be conspiring with the seller.
Even Luke is a broker, so there might be the possibility they are cooperating together.
The doubts are endless.

“There’s no need to go that far. There’s no mistaking that shape and shine. This is definitely the Sacred Spear I desired after seeing it in the auction hall. My memory is quite good.”
“I don’t have a problem with it, are you sure it’s alright?”
“You checked it after you bought it right?”

I ask the man.
When he bought it from the Baradam’s exhibitor, he would have checked it with [Analyze Weapon].
After he bought it, and Luke spoke to him, there would have been no further contact with the Baradam house.

“Of course.”
“Then there’s no problem.”

I received the Sacred Spear.
The Sacred Spear with five empty skill slots.
It’s annoying, but I used the incantation when I opened my item box.
The man also put away the Soul Sucking Staff in his item box.

“I was quite impressed with the way you handled yourself. You weren’t surprised when I checked the weapon at all. Quite splendid. I was part of a good trade.”
“Is that so?”

I knew that he was a weapons merchant.
Should I have been surprised when he suddenly checked the weapon.

“Well then, I’ll take my leave.”

The man greets Luke, and then turns to leave.

“Oh, before you go, did you have the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, and the Kobold Monster Card?”
“The Monster Cards? I have them.”

He has them?
The two monster cards are required for the skill [MP absorption], but they don’t always appear in the auction.
If you wanted to fuse them, you’d normally have at least one already.

“You got the Soul Sucking Staff, so you probably don’t need them anymore, right?”
“That’s right.”
“While we are doing business, could I possibly buy those monster cards?”
“Hmmm. I no longer need them. I bid quite a high price for them, but I was already prepared to sell them at a loss if I returned them to the auction.”

The man looked to Luke as he informed me.
Luke gives a nod to say “I don’t mind.”.
Should I assume that it’s bad for a guest to make deals without permission?
The brokers maintain their strength by standing together.

“Well…”
“I have both the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, and the Kobold Monster Card. You can have them for 4,000 nars each if your interested.”
“I’d like to buy them both.”

He has them both?
I’m lucky.

“Thanks, that will help me out. It’s already quite late today, so lets handle this business in the morning.”

“Okay.”
“I’ll see you in the morning then.”

He doesn’t seem to be carrying the monster cards at the moment.
I thought he’d have them in his item box.
The date for our business has been decided, and he leaves the room.

“I’m sorry to have business without permission.”
“No, there’s profit in being shrewd. I have no problem with it.”
“Is that how it is?”

I apologized to Luke when only the two of us remained.

“His house seems to be quite wealthy. Was it alright that you didn’t have the item checked?”
“It’s fine.”
“I’ve heard that the people of their house are quite talented.”

There’s that too.
Hmmm.
Should I ask?
Maybe we should talk about that.

There’s no problem for me since I have [Analyze], but how does someone act that doesn’t have it?
It’s good to check in a situation like this with someone I can trust a bit.
Thinking about retaliation after the event might be more common.

If it turns out you have a fake item, you can just retaliate.
On an evening with moonlight.
Well… there’s no moonlight in this world.

Even if it wasn’t an especially dark night, I could have a duel because I’m a freeman.
I can take revenge legally if I am deceived.
This might be a common idea in this world.
Luke never brings fake monster cards either. Does he fear retaliation?

But, the opponent is a wealthy house.
When you issue a duel to them, they can substitute a person with a

representative.
If you are rich, you can get a strong guy.
Is it possible to take revenge?

I don't need to worry about it, because I know it's alright.

"I heard that they are a quite strong house, and they are likely to increase in strength more in the future. That's why they want the weapon with [MP Absorption]."
"I see."

I don't really understand it..

"Had you fused those monster cards a while ago?"

Luke asks about it.
That's right. I said I made the weapon with [MP Absorption].
I didn't buy the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card from Luke.
He probably thinks I made it before I started dealing with him.

If I've done dealings before, then it's likely I've been fusing for a long time.
If I've been fusing for a long time, then it's likely I'll keep making orders with Luke.
If I'm skilled at it, then he can expect more dealings in the future.
Is it natural that he's interested?

Like the man who wanted a weapon with [MP absorption], there may be other clients who would request an item with a specific skill.
If he can use me well, then Luke would get a large profit.
I'd receive some of the profit as well.

"My fusing is… well, there are a lot of failures… it isn't that easy."
"Yeah, that seems to be the case."

I deceived him.
I can't be seen as that useful.
I can't show off a 100% success rate, that would cause problems if I end up failing.
If I continue to deal with Luke for monster cards and equipment it's a two way relationship and it will last well that way.

It might have been good before I managed to make the white magic crystal.
Now that I've made it I don't have any trouble with money, so I don't need to worry about it.
When you have no money, you won't think of any good money making ideas. When you do have money you can think of a good idea without worry.
That's how it works.

"It should be easier to get the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card now, please try to get it."
"Sure."

I placed an order for the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card with Luke.
The price should settle down now that that house is no longer buying it.
After placing the order, I return to the house.

"Do nobles often receive items with skills attached to them as betrothal gifts?"

While having dinner with the three girls, I asked Sherry about it.
The Soul Sucking Staff was meant to be used as a betrothal gift.
The Duke of Harz also presented the Ring of Determination to Cassia's parents family.

"I don't know much about nobles. I haven't heard of that."
"The weapon with [MP absorption] was meant to be presented to a woman getting married."
"Oh. I see. So it's like that?"

It's like that?
Sherry seems to understand it.

"I don't know where she's a noble from."
"If she's a nobles daughter then she's probably a Wizard. She'll be using the weapon with [MP absorption] herself."
"Even though she's the bride?"

It doesn't seem like a regular betrothal present.
Maybe it's more like a wedding ring?

“Their family is probably increasing in power.”
“You understand that much? As expected of Sherry.”

Luke said the same thing.

“Master, didn’t have to lower the price right.”
“Well I wasn’t really intending to lower it, but….”

I replied to Roxanne.

“Ah. For a party with a Wizard, their damage output is going to increase.”

Did Sherry start explaining because she noticed I didn’t understand?

“That’s true.”
“A Wizard is an indispensable piece for a party aiming to take an active role in the Labyrinth.”
“You’re probably right.”
“However, not everyone can become a Wizard. It is limited to children of nobles and very rich families.”

Did they use the suicide pill?
Becoming a Wizard seems quite difficult.

“I’ve heard about that.”
“And even if you raise a Wizard from a baby it takes tens or years for them to become a first class Wizard.”
“I understand.”

I see.
A Wizard with [MP absorption] will play an active role in the party.

“This is why they are increasing in strength.”
“Okay.”
“She is probably already quite skilled, but now she will have a better weapon as well.”

I pull the Sacred Spear from the item box.

“A spear?”
“A spear.”
“Spear, desu.”
“It’s the spear Sherry said strengthens magic.”

I present the Sacred Spear to Sherry.

“The Sacred Spear? Yes, I remember saying that.”
“It was good to remember.”

I’ll be *punishing* you so hard tonight Sherry that you won’t even be able to think straight.
It’s going to be wild.
TN: The author used torturing instead of punishing, which I assume sounds more erotic in Japanese for this scenario.

“I think the Sacred Spear is considerably valuable.”

Sherry takes it timidly.

“I got it by trading the weapon you fused earlier Sherry, so you’ve contributed to getting it.”
“This is the first time I’ve seen one.”

You’ve never seen one?
There probably aren’t museums or exhibitions for this kind of thing.
There are a lot of things that I have never seen, even on TV.

The next morning we entered the labyrinth to check how easy the Sacred Spear was to use.
Last night, I don’t remember everything that happened when I started *punishing* the girls.
I found Sex Maniac active when I got up in the morning, so I must have *punished* them quite a bit.

The Sacred Spear is only slightly worse than the Rod of Offerings.
Still, that’s awesome.
If it’s only slightly worse with no skills, then it will be amazing after having [2x Intellect] added to it.

“I’ll use the Rod, and we need to keep using the Spear with [Incantation Interruption] as well. It’s a little bit of a waste, but I’ll have to put this away for now.”
“That’s right. Miria wouldn’t be able to use it as good as the one handed sword, and it wouldn’t be suitable for me.”

It seems that Roxanne and Miria can’t use it either.

“We don’t need [Incantation Interruption] for the Clamshell’s, but we need it for the Kettle Mermaids and Bitch Butterflies. We’ll have to put away the Saint Spear.”

I could give both Spears to Sherry, and have her drop the one she doesn’t need, but that seems a bit worrying.
I will just have to put away the Saint Spear.

Chapter 118 - Defense

After returning from the labyrinth, I head to the Harz duchy to sell the third mirror to the Duke.
For now, this is the last mirror. The duke doesn't have anything to say.
Do you not like Roxanne anymore?
My warning him about taking the matter up to Cassia seems to have taken the desired effect.

Having returned from Bode, I head to the merchants' guild after eating breakfast.
Because I'm not directly acquainted with that weapons merchant, I call for Luke. Two people come over shortly after.

"Ah, I have been waiting for you. Well then, let's head to the guild temple?"
"Guild temple?"
"Yes. It was late yesterday but if the broker is registered, the temple can be used for verification."

The weapons merchant says.
I have an idea what a temple is but what are we verifying? The monster cards?
You can't tell if it's a monster card from just looking at it.
I can tell, however, because I have [Appraisal].

Generally, people use the guild temple for this purpose.
The guild temple can be used for verification, or so I heard.
The reason as to why we couldn't complete the transaction yesterday was not because he didn't have the monster cards but probably because it was evening.

There's a chance for the [Monster Card Fusion] to fail.
The fusion may fail because of a counterfeit monster card. However, it's difficult to distinguish whether the fusion failed because of a counterfeit monster card or not.
For this reason, retaliation can't be completely avoided.

Does Luke not sell counterfeit monster cards to me because he's afraid of retaliation?

We go upstairs, to the backroom on the second floor.
The guild temple seems to be located here.
It's the backside of the auction hall.
Which reminds me, he said earlier that the verification during the auction takes place backstage.

"Here it is. One usage costs 100 Nars. Because there are two cards to be verified, it'll cost 200 Nars. The principle is for the buying side to bear the cost. I'll be the one operating it as only the registered brokers can use the guild temple."

Luke opens the door to the room.
So I have to spend money, huh?
Because I have [Appraisal], I can tell it's genuine without getting it verified but I can't think of an appropriate reason to decline.
Do I really have no choice but to be grateful and use it?

There's a white box in the room.
It's the same guild temple as the one I saw at the Duke of Harz's place.

"Do you want to use the guild temple? Welcome."

When we enter the room, a villager receives us.
I take out two silver coins.
[30% Discount] is not applicable on villagers.

The weapons merchant takes out two monster cards, too.
The Kobold Monster Cards.

"Because you gave me the Soul Sucker Staff, I'll give you a special discount. Two monster cards for 5,600 Nars."

Alright!
With the other party being a weapons merchant, [30% Discount] is effective.
Because it wasn't I whose bid was the winning bid at the auction, it's barely applicable.

Since I already know from [Appraisal] that the cards are genuine, I don't really care about the verification.
Luke places the first monster card on the guild temple and presses a button.
The word 'Kobold' comes up in katakana.
Katakana, huh?
Just like in case of an Intelligence Card, it seems to show the letters that are easy-to-read for the reader.

Is this device same as the device used earlier by the order of Harz knights to verify the Intelligence Cards?
The manner of use and the mechanism of operation seems to be the same.
I don't know what exactly the mechanism is, though.

'Kobold' comes up in case of the second card, too, of course.
I said 'of course' because it was a matter of course.

"Indeed. It was nice doing business with you."
"Likewise. Thank you very much."

I express my gratitude to the weapons merchant and return home.
I take out of my Item Box the newly purchased Kobold Monster Card, the Butterfly Monster Card and the Damascus steel forehead protector.
And hand them to Sherry.

"I just bought a Kobold Monster card, Sherry. Can you please fuse it?"
"Yes."

Because I have only just bought it, there can be no mistake about it.
Is that why Sherry doesn't show uneasy expression when I ask her to perform [Monster Card Fusion]?

"Ooh, as expected of Sherry."
"Thank you very much."

The fusion was a success, of course.

Wind Resistant Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Head Equipment
Skills | Wind Resistance | Empty | Empty | Empty

Three skill slots are still empty.
I put the forehead protector on Roxanne's head.

"This will be Roxanne's."
"Are you sure about this?"
"It's fine."
"Thank you very much."

When I join the frontline, I alternate between Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat and Strengthened Hard Leather Hat.
Because you have to fasten a forehead protector like a headband, you can't just put it on like a cap, which is bothersome.
Even before the fusion, it was Roxanne who was using it.
Although it's annoying that a hat covers Miria's cat ears completely, (she doesn't need the forehead protector for) she doesn't face as many attacks from the monsters as Roxanne does.

We gear up and enter the labyrinth.
Shortly after entering, we reach the boss room of Haruba's 17th floor.
The exploration seemed to have advanced considerably.

"The Kettle Mermaid boss is called Bottle Mermaid. Because it shoots powerful water magic, it's important to interrupt it as soon as possible."
"Well then, I'll ask of you three to engage the boss as usual."

After Sherry briefs about the boss in the waiting room, we enter the boss room.
I take on the accompanying Kettle Mermaid.
I invoke [Rush] successively and take it out swiftly.
It tried to use magic during the battle but I interrupted it without any trouble.

Because it pauses its attacks while constructing a magic formation, this type of magic attack is welcome when I use Durandal.
Since it takes too long, even I can cancel it with [Incantation Interruption].

Thereafter, I join the attack on the boss.
Bottle Mermaid is a mermaid with sharp, pointed head.
Just like a bottle.
Unfortunately, Bottle Mermaid is a disappointing mermaid, too, just like Kettle Mermaid.

The four of us surround it and whittle it down.
With Roxanne in the front and Sherry behind her, holding a weapon with [Incantation Interruption] skill, there's no chance for us to lose.
Still, we can't drop our guard.

The Bottle Mermaid extends its left arm out.
Roxanne tilts her neck and dodges it.
The mermaid instantaneously swings its right arm.
Roxanne pulls her shoulder and dodges it.

The Bottle Mermaid hurls its head onto the upper half of Roxanne's body.
Is the attack head butt or bite?
Since Roxanne swayed the upper half of her body and dodged the attack, its intention remains unknown.
Roxanne has successfully sealed all of the Bottle Mermaid's attacks.

In the meantime, I whittle it down using Durandal.
The boss collapses.

I'm grateful for the fact that the boss battles will continue to be like this up to 22nd floor.
Well, if possible, I would like it to continue past 22nd floor.
We set foot on 18th floor.

"The monster native to Haruba's 18th floor is Fly Trap."
"Err… Fly Traps are weak against fire magic but Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells are resistant to fire magic, right?"
"That's right."

My memory is quite something.
The monsters that will appear the most are weak against fire magic but Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells will appear, too.
This floor is a bit difficult.
There won't be any relief even up to 22nd floor, it seems.

"Well then, Roxanne, this floor may be slightly more difficult. I'll leave it to you."
"Understood."

The group Roxanne guides us to comprises a Clamshell, a Kettle Mermaid and a Fly Trap.

After taking out the Clamshell and the Kettle Mermaid in seven earth spells, I finish off the Fly Trap with fourth [Fireball].
With the level of the floor having moved up, the monsters seem to have become stronger.
Oh well, it can't be helped.

"Like this?"
"That's right. With Master's power, there won't be any problem."
"It's the vanguard, though, who'll have to endure the most. Should we move to Quratar's 17th floor, then?"
"Go, desu."

Because the monster native to Quratar's 17th floor is a fishkin monster, Ma Bream, Miria immediately gets her teeth into it.
We return home, grab the map and enter Quratar's labyrinth.
We proceed through the labyrinth per map.

"Inside is the boss room."

While looking at the map, Roxanne extends her arm to point out.
The boss room? Already?
On Quratar's 17th floor appears Ma Bream, whose weakness is earth magic, and other monsters whose weakness is wind magic.
En route, we didn't go out of the way too much.

"Until we get two whole fish, we will keep hunting in this area."
"Okay, desu."
"Then, I'll guide to a location with a lot of Ma Breams. This way, please."

We have yet to get our first whole fish.
For the sake of a delicious meal, we continue to hunt in the vicinity of the boss room.

"Which reminds me, Roxanne is a knight now, so we can make use of her [Defense] skill during the boss battles."
"[Defense] skill?"
"On Haruba's 17th floor, the door to the boss room immediately opened, not affording me the time to teach you the skill incantation."
"But we don't have any appropriate opponent around here."

Regrettably, the battles with these small fries are not comparable to the boss battles.
They're certainly not an appropriate opponent.

"You're right."
"However, there's no knowing what we may come across against in the labyrinth. It'll be better if I can use it. Can you please teach me?"
"I understand."
"Please."

While we were walking in search of Ma Breams, I cancel Monk and select Knight.
If I cancel [Incantation Omission] and call out 'defense', the skill incantation will float up inside my head.

"To serve my lord, to not only defend them with my body, but to worship them — Defense."

While teaching the skill incantation to Roxanne, I cast [Defense].
I wonder if my defense has increased.
What troubles me is, I can't feel any difference.

"As expected of Master."
"Brahim language is amazing."
"As expected, desu."

Brahim language is superfluous — is what I want to say to Sherry.

"Serve, my lord, worship?"
"That's worship, yes."

I teach it to Roxanne.
*In Hokkaido dialect, it (まつろう) can often be confused with まつろ when spoken.
Which refers to those who don't abide by, those who defy.
まつろ has negative connotation while まつろう has positive connotation, referring to those who worship, those who deify.* (TN: It was incredibly difficult to translate. And it's still not confirmed to be accurate. You can't expect a machine translator to be a kanji expert. I have requested help, though. I'll edit it later when I receive a more accurate version.)

The essence of a knight.
I take a Ma Bream out after teaching Roxanne the skill incantation.
We continue to hunt until we eventually get two whole fish.

“Yes, desu.”

Miria brings the two whole fish over to me.
I receive the fish and put them in my item box.

“Alright. With this, we have our two whole fish. Let’s move on to the boss room, then?”
“Understood.”

Roxanne walks ahead.
Ah
I know the location of the boss room.
But I can’t recall.

No, no.
As we were wandering around inside the cave in search of Ma Breams, I have completely lost track.
It’s not a memory issue.
Because we have already reached outside the boss room once, I can use [Dungeon Walk] to jump to the small room outside the boss room but…

“Sherry, do you remember the direction to the boss room?”
“I don’t.”

Thank god.
Even Sherry says that she doesn’t remember.
It’s not I whose memory is weak.

“Ah, I feel like I have seen this T-junction before. No, it’s probably different. Oh well, I can’t tell whether it’s the same one or different.”
“A while ago, I noticed the smell of a person disappearing from the other side of the door. They entered the boss room, I think.”

I see. Roxanne noticed their smell.
That’s a foul!

How can she even smell someone from the other side?.
There was a crossroads before the T-junction.

“After passing the crossroads, comes the T-junction. From there, you take left and keep walking. Shortly after, you will reach the boss room.”
“That’s right. If you turn right, there’s a group of Ma Breams. What would you like to do?”
“Let’s take them out if they’re close by.”

While we were on our way, we took some monsters out as well.
I pick the white fish up and return.
Unfortunately, they didn’t drop a single whole fish.
Because I had already cancelled Cook, it couldn’t be helped.

“The Ma Bream boss is called Black Diamond Tuna. Because its charge is powerful, we need to be careful. It can also use water magic.”

When I return, Sherry briefs.

“If we turn right, the place is brimming with the groups of Bitch Butterflies and Grass Bees. What would you like to do?”
“Let’s try.”

Both of them are weak against wind magic, so it’ll be efficient.
After taking out one of the groups, we proceed to the boss room.
In the waiting room, I pull out Durandal.
There’s no one in the waiting room but the door to the boss room is closed.

“The party that entered earlier is still fighting, it seems.”
“They’re taking time.”
“Umm, it’s normal. I think it’s Master who’s too strong.”
“Is that so?”
“That is so.”

When I look at Sherry, she nods, so it really seems to be the case.
Thereafter, we took two more groups out.

Chapter 119 - Shiogama

Because the door is now open, we enter the boss room.
Since there's no boss in the room, the earlier party seemed to have safely killed the boss, although they took quite long.
The door closes and smoke gathers at two points.

Two monsters appear.
That the points where the smoke gathered at were high in the air, it was clear that the accompanying monster would be Bitch Butterfly.
The boss, Black Diamond Tuna, is swimming in the air, too.

It doesn't have feet like Ma Bream has.
It's truly a fish.
A fish that swims in the sky.
It's a monster, after all, so it's not surprising.

"I'll sweep the small fry as usual."
"To serve my lord, to not just defend them with my body, but to worship them — Defense."

Roxanne recites the incantation of [Defense] skill.
Right after, Sherry and Miria confront the boss, too.

I approach the Bitch Butterfly and smash Durandal into it.
The butterfly collapses under the barrage of [Rush]s.
I join the attack on the boss.

As for Black Diamond Tuna, it's a slightly-more-than-one-meter-long fish.
Its name is tuna.
It's black from head to tail and seems to be tough.
Its name is quite strong.

Roxanne dodges a charge from the Black Diamond Tuna.
It's quite fast.

It advances to stab.
I have no confidence in evading it.

It's a relief that Roxanne can play with it.
I approach it from around the side and smash Durandal into it.
The tuna swings its tail fin and attacks Miria who was standing behind it.
It has such a trick, huh?

Miria crouches half-a-foot down and dodges the attack.
Finding the gap, when the tuna was trying to attack Miria, Sherry thrusts her spear.
I take a hack at it with Durandal, too.

Even if the Black Diamond Tuna can attack front and back, it got nothing to take care of its sides.
Perhaps, it can bend its tail fin up to 90 degrees?
Wielding Durandal, I approach it carefully in order to confirm my conjecture.
The tuna charges at Roxanne.
Roxanne twitches. The tuna's charge comes to a stop.
While Roxanne was trying to regain her breath, it prepares for another charge.
Was the last one a feint?

Roxanne maneuvers the upper half of her body and dodges it.
During the exchange, Roxanne connects her estoc with the tuna.
Although it used feint, it couldn't see everything through.
My condolences for the tuna.

When the monster comes to a stop after its exchange with Roxanne, I hammer in a [Rush].
The Black Diamond Tuna convulses and drops down.
It's lying on the ground.
It looks like a tuna, indeed.

Before long, it turns into smoke and dissipates.
The item it dropped is lean tuna.
So Ma Bream drops white fish while Black Diamond Tuna drops lean tuna?
Miria jumps at it and brings it over with slight disappointment about her face.

“Yes, desu.”
“Is lean tuna no good?”
“Like Ma Bream, Black Diamond Tuna drops a rare item. It’s called fatty tuna.”

Sherry explains the reason to me.
So a tuna’s rare drop is a fatty tuna, huh?

“I see. How do you cook fatty tuna?”
“Stew, desu. Roast, desu.”

So it can either be boiled or roasted?
Like I speculated, there’s no sashimi in this world.

“Since we got whole fish today, tomorrow’s dinner will be the whole fish.”
“Yes ,desu.”

Miria answers brightly.
It’s so easy to dupe her.
She’s shortsighted, just like a monkey.
You tell them that you are reducing the quantity of their feed, that they will get three in the morning and four in the evening, at which they complain. Later, you tell them that they will get four in the morning and three in the evening, upon which they rejoice.

“Because there seem to be less people in Haruba’s labyrinth, we will keep fighting Black Diamond Tuna in Haruba’s labyrinth until we get fatty tuna. Miria will be cooking it.”
“Okay, desu.”

Says Miria even more brightly.
Were you not duped just now?
Although I was intending to change the subject, I seem to have gotten further into it.

Was she just pretending to have been duped?
It was wrong of me to think that she’s shortsighted, it seems.

At this moment, I’m Explorer Lv43.
Upon reaching Explorer Lv 44; after allocating 63 points toward Durandal,

31 points toward Required Experience 1/10th, 31 points toward Gained Experience 10x, a point each toward Shortened Incantation and Character Reset; I will have 15 points left to allocate. I will then be able to select fifth job.
When I will be able to select fifth job, I will be able to select Cook during the boss battles.

After fighting Black Diamond Tuna in Haruba's labyrinth, I should be able to reach Explorer Lv44.
Thereafter, I'll be able to fulfill Miria's demands.
However, because of [Shortened Incantation], it'll get noisy with the 'Rush, Rush' shouts.

"The monster native to Quratar's 18th floor is Pig Hog.

While we were moving from the boss room to 18th floor, Sherry briefs.

"Pig Hog is resistant to earth magic, right?"
"That's right."

The monster native to 17th floor, Ma Bream, was weak against earth magic but resistant to water magic while Pig Hog is weak against water magic but resistant to earth magic.
Completely opposite.
If both were to appear together, I would be in trouble.

"Roxanne, guide us to a place with both Ma Breams and Pig Hogs. We should try to fight them both once, at least. After that, we will move back to Haruba."
"Understood."

Because Pig Hog is native to 18th floor of Quratar's labyrinth, it will appear on 18th floor the most. Since Ma Bream is native 17th floor, it will appear on 18th floor the second most.
18th floor of Quratar's labyrinth is quite difficult for the weakness and resistance of both the monsters are completely opposite.

Fortunately, I have already fought against Pig Hogs before.
I have already confirmed that [Meteor Crash] is not as effective on Pig Hogs.
After fighting here once, we will move back to Haruba's labyrinth.

We have to explore Haruba's 18th floor. There's no such thing in Quratar's case.
We can simply go to the boss room of Quratar's 18th floor and proceed to 19th.
That said, because Pig Hog drops pork, I'll be visiting this floor every now and then.
Other than that, it's worthless.

We advance through the cave under Roxanne's guidance.
After taking out two Pig Hogs in seven water spells, I finish off lone Ma Bream with sixth [Sandball].

"Un, I knew that it would be difficult."
"It's not much."

Even though I said that it's difficult, all I do is cast spells from the back.
Even if the duration of battles lengthens, it's the vanguard, Roxanne, who'll bear the brunt.
Since you said that 'it's not much', are you fine with it?

"Well then, let's move to Haruba?"

After the battle in Quratar was over, we move to Haruba's 18th floor.

Next day. We carry on the exploration of Haruba's 18th floor.
We finish the exploration ahead of time.
Cooking being the reason.

"Because I'm already making soup for Miria, I'll ask of you two, Roxanne and Sherry, to make one more dish."
"Understood."
"Since you are cooking the whole fish, I wonder if stir-fried vegetables would do."

Sherry takes nutritional balance into account, it seems.
As you would expect from her.

"That would be great."
"Hopefully. Sherry and I will make stir-fried vegetables, then."

“Alright. Then, Miria will be helping me.”
“Yes, desu.”

Miria doesn’t seem to have any unpleasant expression about her face.

“Great, Miria.”

Well, this time, it won’t be as laborious a task as blending mayonnaise.
This time, she’ll just have to be a fire watchman.

After returning home, I add some salt to an egg, whip it and spread it on a pan.
As for the salt, it’s kobold salt. Miria was the one who ground it. It’s not a laborious task.
I put the herb-dredged whole fish on the salt. After that, I coat the entire fish with the salt.
It’s shiogama-roasted whole fish.

Because there was some room in the pan still, I put a pork rib next to the whole fish.
With the second whole fish, I make soup.

“I have never seen such a method of cooking. As expected of Master.”
“I’m seeing it for the first time, too.”
“Wow, desu.”

They are surprised to see shiogama-roast.
They have never seen it before, it seems.
Even in Japan, it’s not that common.

“You first put it on fire for 30 minutes. After that, you take it off fire and steam it for an hour. Miria, can you please monitor the fire?”
“Yes, desu.”

I put the pan on fire and entrust it to Miria.
While it was being roasted, I heat the bath.
After heating the bath, I make the whole fish soup.
When you use dropped items as ingredients, it doesn’t produce any lye, so it’s convenient.

“Alright. It’ll soon be ready.”

Having carried the pot containing the soup to the dining table and returned to the kitchen, I announce so after having a look at the shiogama-roast.
Since no cracks can be seen, the shiogama seems to have been roasted well.
I hope that it won’t taste burnt.

I stick a knife into the salt.
It’s hard.

“Let me do it.”

Sherry takes the knife from me.
When Sherry sticks the knife into the shiogama, it splits open.
From inside, comes out a nicely roasted whole fish.

“Ooh!”
“Wow, desu.”

It’s pretty nicely roasted.
It went well.
The salt is stuck to the pan. It’ll be quite difficult to clean it. I’d just pretend that I didn’t see it.

I put the whole fish and the pork rib on a dish and bring it to the dining table.
I first serve the fish soup.
Starting from mine, I pour it in four bowls in order.
I put the whole fish in Miria’s platter.

“Dig in.”
“Thank you, desu.”
“Are you not gonna eat?”
“Yes, desu.”

I insert my knife into the shiogama-roasted whole fish.
The knife cuts it like butter.
It seems to be soft.

I take a spoonful and put it in my mouth.
The soft meat of the bream explodes inside my mouth.
It's delicious.
The salt seems to be in moderation.

"It's delicious. Try it, Roxanne."

I pass the dish with the shiogama-roasted fish to Roxanne. I try the soup next.
The mellow and juicy, boiled whole fish melts inside my mouth.
It tastes equally good.

"It's tasty."
"The soup is good, too. Adding the whole fish to the soup was the right choice."
"Right choice, desu."

While it was Roxanne's and Sherry's turn to try the shiogama-roasted fish, Miria takes some soup.
They bite into the whole fish.
Later, when it was Miria's turn again, she grabs it.
She grabs it with everything she has.

"So it's holiday tomorrow, right? Would Sherry like to go to the library? Actually, won't the library be closed?"

While waiting for Miria to calm down, I ask.
Tomorrow is the holiday, the day when one season ends and another begins.

"Is it going to be a day off for us?"
"Well, isn't it a holiday?"
"On the calendar but…"

So it's a holiday in name only?
When I was out, buying ingredients, I did hear that the bakery and the vegetables shop will remain open.
But the guilds will be closed.
Is the holiday perhaps not for slaves?

“Generally, it is.”
“However, shops conduct their business like they normally do. The library remains open every day of the year. And there’s no such thing as ‘closed’ in case of the labyrinth.”
“Is that so?”

Why can’t there be a holiday at the labyrinth?
The art is a blast. (TN: Don’t ask me why it’s here)

“The orders of knights will be out of commission. The counters of guilds will be closed. Farmers will have a day off, too.”
“I’ll be going to the auction tomorrow. Because there’s participation fee, I’ll be going there by myself. Like I said earlier, it’s in order to increase the battle strength of our party.”

I offer an excuse to increase the number of party members.
Furthermore, it’s not a good decision to take these three with me as they’ll definitely object to the addition of a female party member.

“That’s right.”
“We will enter the labyrinth early in the morning. After that, it’ll be day off.”

I propose, at which Roxanne nods.

“Thank you very much.”
“Thank you very much. Then, can I really go to the library?”
“Sherry will go to the library.”

I have no idea as to how large is the collection of books in the library but I’m sure that Sherry couldn’t possibly read them all in just two days.

“Then, I’ll spend some time shopping and relax for rest of the day.”
“As usual for Roxanne. What do you want to do, Miria? Is there any place you want to go to?”
“Sea, desu.”

That was a quick answer.
Well, even if she said ‘sea’, it doesn’t necessarily mean ‘swim’, right?
Yeah, I know that she intends to step into the water.

“Will you be fine?”
“Fine, desu.”

Even though she said that she’ll be fine, I can’t help but feel uneasy about this.

“Except through fishing, if you catch a fish, it’ll be a big problem, I think.”

Sherry seems to be thinking the same thing as me.

“I thought so. Does fishing exist here?”
“Yes, it’s a recognized hobby of nobles and retirees. Because nobles and influential people catch fish through fishing, it has been recognized as an exception to the fishery rules.”
“Is fishing at the sea allowed, too?”
“My grandfather used to go to the sea for fishing, so I believe that it’s allowed. There should be a fishing tackle shop in the Imperial Capital.”

Just like she said, her grandfather was a wealthy man.
Are those who do fishing different from those who catch fish for food?
I don’t get it.

“Well then, Miria, will you try fishing? Fishing. F-i-s-h-i-n-g.”
“Yes, desu. Fishing, desu.”

Answers Miria.
Will Miria really be content with fishing?
If she’s happy, I’m happy.
However, whether she understands what fishing really means or not is questionable.

Chapter 120 - Tackle

Next morning. Having returned from the labyrinth, we go to the library in the Imperial Capital after eating breakfast.
My Item Box is filled with the items I picked up earlier in the morning.
I can't go sell them since it's the holiday today.

I send Sherry off after giving her 1 gold and 5 silver coins.
I see her off until she was inside but for some reason, Sherry turns back when she reaches the reception desk.

"What happened? Did you forget something?"
"No, I asked for the location of the fishing tackle shop. They said it is in the opposite direction of the adventurers' guild, toward the Imperial palace, the second street to the right."
"You went to the trouble of asking? Thank you."

I was planning on asking at the adventurers' guild. She really saved me the trouble.
I am grateful.
Perhaps no one will be there because it's the holiday.
After Sherry was inside, I head out with Roxanne and Miria.

We move behind the library, toward the white wall of the palace. Lined up in front of us are magnificent mansions.
It's not enough to just say 'lined up'. All the buildings are separated by the equal space.
It really gives the feeling of a noble district.
Even the road is different from the main street. The style has completely changed into the stone-paved one.

I feel totally out of place.
If I continue onward, will I find the Emperor's residence?

"It looks to be there."

Roxanne points.
There's a store where many fishing tackles are on display.
It's the fishing tackle shop.

The rod is made with some kind of wood.
It has a dull feeling but by all means, it really looks like a fishing rod.
It can certainly be used for fishing.

"Welcome."
"I want to do deep-sea fishing. Is it possible for you to prepare the necessary tools?"

I go inside and ask the shop clerk.
Not many fishing rods were on display inside the shop.
The mechanism needs to be changed depending on the targeted fish and the location. They can't be mass-produced.
The clerk's job is Merchant. It'll be quicker to have him prepare it.

"Are you fishing for the first time?"
"Yes, and I think Miria have never done fishing either."
"No, desu."

Miria was looking at the fishing gears with great interest but she comes over when I ask her.
As expected, she hasn't done fishing before.

"Yes, sir. Let me prepare it for you."
"I will leave it to you."

The clerk prepares a tackle.
Rod, reel, fishing thread, weight, hook.
There doesn't seem to be any float.
Is it thread fishing, then?

"As for the fishing rod, I think this one is good for beginners. When you get used to it, you will also get to understand your preference and then it can be adjusted appropriately for different fishing locations."
"Got it."
"One reel and two fishing threads, including a spare. The weight and the thread can be changed depending on the location and the fish you want to

catch. For this reason, we provide different types. By connecting these, you can achieve your desired settings."

The clerk shows us an example of how to set it up.
The thread goes out from the fishing rod. A hook is then attached to the tip of the thread.
Nothing particularly different from usual.

"I see."
"The bait will sink after it has been attached to the hook. Let's see… as a bait, you can either use worms or shrimps. You can get them by the seaside. They are great to catch small fish. The shell can't be used, however."

In this world, the shell contains poison.

"I see, I see."
"I see, desu."
"Use heavy weight when the wind and the current are strong. However, if it sinks completely, it will get damaged in case it gets jammed somewhere. Therefore, you need to adjust the weight, so it doesn't sink completely."

The clerk explains to us how to do fishing.
I only listened to half of what he said. As for Miria, she was eager to learn everything with the assistance of Roxanne's translation.

"I see, desu."
"Regarding fishing, I heard there are certain rules and areas. Is that true?"
"Yes, that's right. The place where you are fishing has to be approved by the Empire. Furthermore, there is a limit of one rod and one hook per person. Attaching more than one hook to the line is prohibited."
"Got it."

A single hook?
Because there are no floats, fishing with one hook will not cause damage to the fishing ground.

I look at the prepared fishing rod in the clerk's hand.
It's a three-piece fishing rod.
It's made of wood. Quite soft.

Inside out.
A pointless use of high-tech.

The reel is dull, though.
There is no bail arm attached either, so the cast can't be used.
It really is just winding-the-thread.

"This fishing rod is the pride of our store. I'm sure you will be able to use it for a long time."
"What do you think about it?"

I pass the base piece of the fishing rod to Miria.
It's about one meter long.
Connecting the three, the fishing rod measures three meters.

"Also, you might want to have a basket while fishing, and it would be convenient if you have a colander when you catch a fish. Both the basket and the colander are available right here."

While Miria was checking the fishing rod, I go to check the basket and the colander out.
Both are skillfully made using wood.
Since there is no plastic in this world, the wood processing technique has advanced.

"It's okay, desu."

When I return with a basket and a colander, Miria passes the fishing rod back to me.
With this, everything seems to be done.

"Do we have everything here? Then, can I buy all of these?"
"Thank you very much. Let me see… as a customer who's fishing for the first time, the total amount to pay will be 3,500 Nars. I will also add a bag and a tackle box to put the fishing rod in."

The clerk gives us a bag and a tackle box for the fishing gear.
As for the price, I'm confused.
If I take it as daily food expense, it seems high. However, is it still high if I

take it as an equipment?
30% discount was effective, at least.

“That’s bad.”
“Bad, desu.”

Miria gently pulls my arm and says in a low voice.
Did my feeling bad made her feel bad, too?

“It’s fine.”

I place my hand on her head and pat her gently.
I thought it would cost a gold coin when I heard it was a hobby of nobles, but it wasn’t the case.
It’s satisfactory.

Miria holds the fishing rod and the box while Roxanne holds the colander as we leave the store.
I hold the basket.

“Thank you, desu.”
“I hope you get us a good catch.”
“Good catch, desu.”

Miria’s eyes show determination.
The only thing I want from you is to not jump into the sea to catch fish if you fail with the rod.
Well, Roxanne seems to have given her similar warning already, so it should be fine.
Even if she doesn’t listen to what I’m saying, she will be sure to follow Roxanne’s orders.

We go back to the wall behind the library in order to warp.
The destination is Hafen in the Harz Duchy.
Whenever I think of a seaside, this is the only place that comes to my mind.
Palmasque seems to be surrounded by sea as well, but I’m not sure about it since I never went out of the guild.

It isn’t morning yet in Hafen.
Is it still the holiday here or has the holiday already passed?

The holiday is between spring and summer. In short, it is something like the summer solstice.
The day's activities should start earlier in this part of the north than the rest.

I take a look around.
The elf Village Head Lv3 is here.
He's the the same Village Head from before.
I approach him to talk.

"Is it okay to do fishing around here?"
"Yes, it is permitted to do fishing anywhere around here. The seashore further down seems to be quite a good point. The people who did fishing there before managed to get quite a good catch. Because it's a rocky area there, it is difficult to setup a net, so there seems to be a lot of fish."
"Further down? Let's go, then."

I follow the village chief's instructions, and reach the shore.
There is no possibility to lay waste for this fishing ground. I can understand the reason why it is hard to setup a fishing net around here.
Usually, in the places where you can move around freely, there will be no fish, making this point not bad at all.

The shore has a large number of reefs.
It really is a good point.
Miria is looking around with a serious expression.
She runs to a rock, and looks into the sea.

"There's fish, desu."

Satisfied, she comes back.

"So, will Miria be fishing here?"
"Yes, desu."

I am still concerned about her but because it's the holiday today, I should probably let her do what she likes.
I call Roxanne over, and leave all the fishing gear.
I put a leather hat on Miria.

“Just in case, I’m giving you five silver coins. You can buy whatever you may need from that village.”
“Thank you, desu.”
“I will pick you up in the afternoon. Don’t go too far from here.”
“Yes, desu.”

I entrust Miria with the fishing gear, and leave.
I go to the forest close to the shore. From there, I cast Warp for the wall back home.

“Will she be fine?”
“It will be alright. There should be a few beastkin in the village who speak that language.”

Ah, that reminds me, she somehow managed a conversation before.
So, will there really be no problem?
Besides, Miria knows about the sea better.

“And Roxanne, I will be giving you ten silver coins.”
“Umm, just me? Is that really okay?”
“Since Roxanne is the number one slave, you are special.”
“Yes! Thank you very much, Master!”

I hand ten silver coins to Roxanne.
In Roxanne’s case, it is not necessarily a waste since she will be shopping.
She will surely buy clothes for Miria, too, this time.
It was the logical thing to do, and it also landed me a lot of points.

Roxanne accepts it with a smiling face.
Apparently, the auction participation fee is 1,000 Nars. It is about time I go to the auction hall.
Perhaps, the participation fee will not be confirmed until I go to the auction hall.

“Well then, I am off.”
“Yes, have a good day. Find a good party member. I will leave it to you, then.”

Roxanne has already accepted my expanding the harem.
I will have to take full advantage of her words.
I promise her.

I pass the house keys to Roxanne, and jump to the waiting room in the merchants' guild.
The waiting room is crowded with people.
This is the first time I'm seeing these many people in the waiting room of the merchants' guild.
There is a possibility of hitting someone while coming out of the wall.

Nah, it was okay.
I didn't collide with anyone.
I thought my heart would beat faster while choosing a new harem member, but I am plenty calm.
Nothing will make me fail.

There is a different receptionist in the waiting room.
Once you pay the participation fee there, you can go inside, it seems.
I follow behind the line of people in front of me.

"Is the participation fee 1,000 Nars?"
"That's right."
"Hey you lots, did you know? It seems a wizard slave will be exhibited today."

When I was about to pay the participation fee to go inside, someone shouts.
A dirty old man who looks like the boss of a workers' camp.

"Is that true?"

The guy who went inside before me reacts.
Everyone seems to be interested in the wizard he mentioned.

I object.
What's important is not their job.
But whether they're beautiful or not.

"I will get them no matter what. Do you have white gold coins? If you don't, go back home and bring some."

The old man keeps on shouting. You can hear his voice everywhere.
I wonder if people will really go back with this.
As expected, no one went back. The old man leaves, looking satisfied.

I pay 1,000 Nars and go inside.
I advance to the inner part.
The small rooms, which are normally used for meeting, have been turned into showrooms for the slave merchants to exhibit the slaves they are selling.
I enter one such room.

“Welcome, our shop is exhibiting this man from the dragonkin tribe.”

The slave merchant speaks as soon as I step in.
There are three men inside the room.
One of them is most likely a customer since he is an explorer.

Second one is a sturdy, big, muscular man.
His job is Dragon Knight Lv1.
A job a chuunibyou would love.
I wonder if it’s a racial job of the dragonkin tribe.

“I see.”
“The dragonkin tribe excels in battling abilities. Their power and presence can easily be the main force of any party in close combat. You may consider them the best combat slaves available.”

I receive recommendation from the slave merchant.
Even though they’re called dragonkin, they don’t look that different from humans.
Their body is slightly larger.
I guess they really are suited for combat.

“I see.”
“This man is an outstanding one even amongst the dragonkin. I can recommend him with confidence. Also, he has already been training in the labyrinth, he has already acquired the Dragon Knight job, so he can immediately be put to use. It is also rare to have someone from dragonkin as slave. You will certainly regret it if you don’t bid on him when you have the opportunity.”

You are saying he has trained but he is just a Dragon Knight Lv1.
He seems to have only just acquired it.
I can’t trust the recommendation of this slave merchant.
And above all, he is a man, so that’s a ‘thanks but no thanks’.

I decline politely and leave the room.
I move to the next room.
There are two female slaves in this room.

Both of them are sitting on chairs.
It's different from the room with the dragonkin before as they are not being kept separately in a cage.
Well, if they must be put in a cage, it means they may run away immediately after you buy them.

One of the women is young and cute.
The other one is a beautiful, mature woman.
I'm not sure if they are good enough to be in this auction, though.

"These two are mother and daughter."

The slave merchant whispers in my ear, with a grin on his face.
I see.
It's something I really want to try once before dying.

If I didn't become an explorer, I would definitely become an AV actor.
When I retire, I would like to be a professor in a girls' college. That place is a mountain of treasures.

I withdraw because I don't have that much of an interest right now.
Or perhaps, it is not practical.
I wonder if I should've bought them and sold them off immediately.

There's a woman in the next room, too.
Apparently, there are more women around here.
Earlier, Alan the slave merchant told me that women are more expensive.
How can they be so common?

The woman in the next room is graceful and noble. She is quite the beauty.
As long as she remained silent, she would look like a young lady.
I think she has been a slave for a short time.
Her grade is indeed high.

"Do you like her? Although she is not suited for combat, she is a first-class beauty."

Indeed. With just one glance, you can tell she is not suited for rough stuff.
I had to go out since more customers were coming in.
She is an enormous beauty, with her hair pulled back.
Since she can not fight, however, there is no helping it.

If she sat quietly, with her long hair stretched out, she would look just like a princess.
Anyways, there is no way she can become a princess now.
Rather than getting disillusioned after hearing her story, it's better to form delusions without talking to her.

Besides, this is not the best place to talk for this is a place where people are being sold.
I'll just keep her impression as that of a student who never sought sexual entertainment.

I pull myself together and move to the next room.
Only one woman in this room?
There is the slave merchant as well, but no customers.

She is really beautiful, too.
Slaves exhibited at the auction seem to be different.
She also looks big and muscular, so I don't think she will have any problem even with combat.

"Welcome."

When the slave merchant calls out, the woman stands up.
Huge.

Vesta | Female | 15 years old
Villager Lv2

I take a look at her.
She's a woman with fiery, red hair.

Chapter 121 - Auction

“H-Huge.”

The woman who stood up was significantly taller than me.
Isn’t she about two meters tall?
Maybe taller. She possibly exceeds even 2 meters.

And her chest is so huge.
Two huge watermelons are popping out of her clothes.
More than a meter… seriously…?

Calm down. Don’t panic.
Maybe they look big because of her body size.
If the whole body is big, other body parts will probably be big, too.
That must be it.

Considering this, could her proportions be same as Sherry’s?
After all, there is a significant difference in height.
Isn’t she just twice the size of Sherry’s?
I knew it. There’s no doubt.

If her height is nearly twice as long, it is not strange for her breasts to be twice as big.
Yeah, they’re merely double.
If her height is double, that makes her chest four times bigger.
And if you take the volume into account, then it is about eight times bigger.
TN: Hx2 Wx2 Lx2

Eight times…

“Nice to meet you.”

She bows eight times.
No, wait.

They move up and down eight times.
Vesta's face should be a little bigger than Sherry's. Shouldn't it need to be double, too?
Considering her height, it is rather small.
There are various parts that change in size as you grow.

Vesta's legs and arms are long and slim. She looks like a model.
Simple multiplication won't work, I guess.

Her skin color is light brown.
Her hair is red and short-cut.
Her eyes are red like her hair.
And those big irises make her eyes even more beautiful.

When Vesta raises her head, it can be seen that she is more than one head taller than me.
Her chest is at the same level as my eyes.
That's exactly where I want to look.
What is her cup size? [TL: i think he talks about the movement, moving this and that]

"Her name is Vesta, she is from the dragonkin tribe. As she just turned 15 and can therefore be sold, I brought her here."

The slave merchant approaches me.
You have to be 15 years old to be eligible for the auction?
Well, I am not particularly looking for a slave any younger than this.

"Since she is from the dragonkin tribe, she must be able to fight in the labyrinth, right?"
"Of course. Although She was not specially trained, her combat abilities are the best in my house."
"I'll be fine, I think."

Vesta says while standing.
She is Villager Lv2. Well, I can see that she hasn't fought much.
Just like the Dragon Knight Lv1 before, but she doesn't have a newly acquired job, at least.

“Have you been to any labyrinth before?”
“No, but I have killed a monster in the vicinity of one. It didn’t hurt at all, so I don’t think I will have any problem.”

Well, Slow Rabbit Lv1 did have considerable offensive ability.

Whatever. If she says that she can fight, then it shouldn’t be a problem, I guess.

“However, there are a few weaknesses of the dragonkin. They are not good at night, so please avoid fighting late in the night. Also, there is a special instruction regarding their meal.”
“Is there something you can’t eat?”
“I don’t have any particular likes and dislikes in respect of food, so any food will be fine. However, dragonkin need to eat volley once every ten days.”

I sent my question to the top, and the answer came down from the top.
In the physical sense of the word.
It doesn’t mean ‘looking down’ from the top.

“Volley is an item dropped by Oystershell. You can either kill Oystershells or buy it from the guild. The dragonkin, especially the females, become physically weak if they don’t consume volley.”

The slave merchant adds.
He even made the demerits known. What an honest merchant he is.

“Isn’t that a problem?”
“She is a virgin sex slave. It is her first year as slave since she just turned 15, so you will definitely enjoy it. Don’t you think so?”

She has a beautiful face, and she doesn’t have a problem with fighting in the labyrinth.
She has a gentle personality, too.
Vesta here meets all the requirements I had in mind.

“She is not bad.”

Rather, I really want her.
I really want to buy her.
Her beauty and her big chest.

However, I am pretending to be troubled, so he doesn't get his teeth into it.
But it shouldn't really matter since I can just bid on her.
Or perhaps, it's in order to have a higher starting bid?

"I am thankful for your time."
"Thank you very much."

Vesta expresses her gratitude.
Although it was pleasant, I am not happy since it was directed to other visitors.
Her attitude is similar to an attendant's since all the visitors in the shop are potential customers.

"It all comes down to whether they can make a successful bid or not. Don't try to sell yourself to every visitor and flatter them."

I shot back since I don't approve of her doing it.
The slave merchant grins.

"Umm, I think it's alright."

How can it be alright?

"As for the other visitors, I will just tell them that I can't enter the labyrinth."

Because another visitor enters, I take my leave.
Even If you say that, I will still be troubled.

Thereafter, I visited other rooms.
As expected, the majority of the slaves are females.
Because it's the auction, it's full of beautiful women.

Even so, Vesta and the young lady from the room before her are the ones that stand out the most.

Since I have made my choice, it is time to get started.
I step into the next room while thinking that.

The room is full of visitors.
Is there some great slave here?
I walk to the front.

“So you participated, after all.”

As I went to the front, someone whom I know greets me.
It’s Alan, the slave merchant from Vale.

“Oh, it’s you.”
“We are exhibiting a wizard this time. It is the best job to improve party strength. I can recommend him with absolute confidence.”
“A wizard?”

Which reminds me, that old man was shouting something like this back at the reception desk.
So a wizard is really going to be exhibited in the auction, huh?
Certainly, Wizard is the best job a party can have.
Sherry, too, said that a party requires a wizard.

Well, I am the only one covering it for our party.
With two, our offensive ability will be doubled.
I would really love that.

If only he weren’t a man.

The man standing next to Alan was surrounded by the visitors.
His job is Wizard.
So he is Alan’s slave, huh?
Well, it doesn’t say ‘man’, it’s showing ‘♂’.

Is he really a man?

“Right before the auction, he was sold suddenly by a certain house.”
“To suddenly sell a wizard, they seem to be in a crisis.”
“Lately, his earnings had started to decline. It wasn’t originally the case.

Over time, it reached the point where it was impossible for him to repay his debt."

A person from Baradam family, huh?
Alan once said that having sources is important for a slave merchant.
Roxanne and that woman from the Baradam family were acquaintances in the past.
It is no wonder that Alan managed to get Roxanne if he has connections in the Baradam family.

This wizard, however, does not have a family name.
He doesn't seem to belong to the Baradam family.
How can a commoner child even become a wizard?

"Probably thanks to an Orb he somehow got his hands on."
"As one would expect, it is rare for a wizard to be exhibited. What does Michio-sama think about the wizard there?"

Is it really rare for a wizard to appear on the auction?
I have heard that only the children of nobles and rich people can become wizards.
It really is a shame that he is a man.

I can make a successful bid on him, and offer him in exhange for a female wizard. The problem is, I don't know of anyone who has a female wizard.
It's probably impossible to have two wizards exhibited on the same auction.

"He will sell for quite high."
"That's right. It won't be surprising even if he goes for more than 1 Million Nars."

Alan sticks out his chest proudly.
It will be ridiculous if that happens.
I politely decline him, and try to leave.

"Have you guys prepared your white gold coins?"

When I turn around, the old man from before was still shouting.
I see.

Is he making a declaration to everyone that he is absolutely getting him,
In order to lessen the competition?

I am not sure if it will turn out like that, though.
Still, I don't think someone who gets scared from just that can compete with him in the first place.
I want to say that I have two white gold coins, but I decide against it.

"The order has been decided via lottery. Please move to the second floor as the auction will be starting shortly."

Someone makes the announcement.
So it's finally starting, huh?
I head to the second floor.

A papyrus is posted on the hall's door.
Apparently, it has the order listed on it.
Since i can't read the letters, I don't know what's written on it.
I should seriously start learning it from Roxanne.

"Good, the wizard's turn is at the end, so you guys just go ahead and spend all your money."

The old man is still shouting.
It looks like Alan's exhibition will be the last.
It doesn't matter to me either way.

I go inside the hall.
I pick a suitable seat.
I can't say it's house-full, but about 80% of the seats have already been occpied.
Quite a number of people seem to have showed up.

"Gentlemen, thank you very much for you visit today. We will now begin the auction sponsored by the slave merchants' guild. The order of the exhibition has already been decided via a lottery conducted fairly. The first exhibitor, please come forward."

The auctioneer, who's standing to the left, starts the auction.
Two men come on to the stage.
He is that man from the dragonkin tribe.

"Nice to meet you."
"First exhibit, a 15 years old male from the dragonkin tribe. The minimum bid is 100,000 Nars. Then, please go ahead."

Once the slave merchant bows his head, the bidding starts.

"220,000"

Someone bids.
It went up to 220,000 all of a sudden?
Shouldn't the first bid be same as the minimum bid, and it's then raised by 10%.
Is the auction not attended only by the brokers who are used to it?

"230,000"
"250,000"
"260,000"

However, the bidding proceeds without any complaint.

"270,000"
"280,000"
"300,000"
"310,000"

The auction continues as if nothing happened.

"320,000"
"330,000"

Eventually, there were only two people who were still bidding.
The first bidder is a man, and the other one is a man, too.

"350,000"
"360,000"

“370,000”
“380,000”

Both of them are increasing it by 10,000 at a time.
Then suddenly, a long line forms in front of one of the two men in the back.
I wonder what is that for?

At closer inspection, it looks like many people are lining up and putting money in front of that man.
Silver coins are piling up in front of that man.
And a good number.

“I will not lose to an asshole who breaches etiquette!”

The man, whom the coins were put in front of, raises his voice.
Is this donation drive in order to punish a breach of etiquette?
Although no one donated a gold coin, if a hundred people donated a silver coin each, it would easily amount to 10,000 Nars.
It is possibly a threat to the other man.

If I commit a breach of etiquette, will I receive the same treatment.
I put a silver coin, too, and go back to my seat.

“390,000”
“Guu… then, 395,000.”
“The minimum increment to the bid is 10,000 Nars. Anything less than that will not be allowed.”

The man who started the bidding gets his bid rejected by the auctioneer.
The breach of etiquette was allowed, but when it was a breach of rule, it was rejected.
If he didn’t know about the rule regarding the denomination of increment in the bid, is this the first time this man is participating in an auction?

“I understand.”
“390,000. The current bid is 390,000. Anyone else want to bid…? Since no one else wants to bid… then, the successful bid is 390,000 Nars. Please both the successful bidder and the exhibitor move to the room backstage.”

The winner gathers the silver coins and leaves for the back room.
The donation drive was serious. Really serious.

“400,000 for a dragon knight is not bad, but I would like to save my money for the wizard.”

I hear someone mutter.
It wasn’t particularly higher that the market price, it seems.
He is still just a Lv1, though.

Also, they don’t want to spend their money early on since the wizard’s turn is still to come.
It makes sense, of course.

One can not but hesitate about bidding if the second choice is exhibited before the first choice.
Is this how the order is decided via lottery?
I would be grateful if Vesta appears early for me.

Did my prayers get answered? Vesta is the third person to appear on stage.
Vesta and her slave merchant both come on to the stage.

She appeared before the wizard or the young lady.
If someone wants a combat slave, they can get the wizard. If they want a beautiful woman, the young lady awaits.
This is a cleverly designed order.

“Next exhibit, a 15-year-old girl from the dragonkin tribe. The minimum bid is 200,000 Nars. Then, please start.”
“200,000”

I bid as soon as he says ‘start’.
This momentum is crucial.

“210,000”
“310,000”

The bid increased by 10,000 Nars.
So I decided to increase the amount to 10 times.
Therefore, I bid 100,000 Nars.

“320,000”
“420,000”
“430.000”
“My bid is 530,000”

I increase it by another 100,000 Nars.
It is necessary to show them my determination in bidding, regardless of the amount.
Since I have white gold coins, this amount will not make me falter.

“you…”
“540,000”
“640,000”

One person seems to have already quit.
But I still increase it by another 100,000 Nars.

“640,000. The current bid is 640,000 Nars.”
“…”

The man who bid 540,000 glares at me.
I keep up my poker face.

“Anyone else wants to bid…? If not… then, the successful bid is 640,000 Nars. Please, both the successful bidder and the exhibitor move to the room backstage.”

The man who bid 540,000 quit, after all.
What a weak man.
Looks like the strategy to increase the bid by 100,000 Nars worked.
I have successfully won Vesta.

Chapter 122 - Vesta

After my bid on Vesta was declared winning, we move to the backroom.
As I thought, it is the same room where the guild temple is.

“Thank you.”
“Thank you, Master.”

Vesta bows in gratitude following the slave merchant.
I don’t know if she’s really grateful or just being courteous.
Nah, she really is grateful, I think.

“We will wait here inside the room. You can go back if you want to participate in the bidding.”
“Ah, let’s go together.”
“Certainly.”

After your bid has been declared winning, you can go back to the auction hall to participate in the bidding.
Let’s forget about the wizard, I wonder how much I can buy that young lady for.

However, I’m afraid of what Roxanne would have to say if I were to bring two women at the same time.
Honestly though, looks aside, that young lady is not fit for combat.

Give a man an inch, and he will take a mile.
I have managed to acquire Vesta.
I should be satisfied with just that.

“I will be in your care from now on.”
“Likewise. Please take care of me.”
“I will be relying on you.”

I send my message to the top.
Vesta really is a beauty.
Big, red eyes.
Tight, lifted nose.
Long, slim legs.

Being looked down at from the top is not that bad.
And I would love to greet the beautiful cups in front of my eyes.

I head to the meeting room.
However, there is a strange feeling of intimidation when I am near Vesta.
It is the feeling of pressure.
Don't walk behind me, please.

I go inside the meeting room.
Vesta stands next to me.

"There is a 1,000 Nars compensation when you successfully purchase a slave from the guild organized auction, so I will deduct 1,000 Nars from the bid amount of 640,000 Nars. This time, the auction was a great success for me, so the total amount to pay shall be 447,300 Nars."

Oops
30% discount unexpectedly worked.
I thought it would be inapplicable in the auction.
Oh well, it isn't this slave merchant who's paying.
It's I who's paying.
It's my win to have gotten the 30% discount skill to work.

"My bad."

I finish the payment before the slave merchant changes his mind.
There's not even any need to use the white gold coin.
After the necessary changes to the Intelligence Cards and a long explanation, Vesta is finally mine.

"Thank you very much. Please take care of me if I need something in the future."

After bidding our byes to the slave merchant, both Vesta and I walk out of the room.
The slave merchant stays in the meeting room.

“Does the merchant have something else to do?”
“He said he’s meeting with someone.”

Vesta mutters.
It seems he still have some errand to run.
The auction is an opportunity for slave merchants to meet, after all.
It’s not strange for acquaintances to exchange information after the auction ends.

“First, try to wear these.”

I take out hard leather shoes from my Item Box.
Unsurprisingly, Vesta is barefoot.
Even if they are combat slaves, slave merchant won’t provide them with appropriate equipment.

“Okay, thank you very much. Are we entering the labyrinth right now?”
“We are not.”
“Then, what are they for?”
“To keep them on.”

Even though Vesta is big, it should be fine because of the magic incorporated in the equipment.
After all, it fits Sherry perfectly.

“Okay, thank you.”

Vesta bows and wears the shoes.
Her ass easily reaches my chest.
What?
Is she bragging about her long, slim legs?

I so want to shove it in her ass, but I control myself.
Such a kid I am.
It’s not like Vesta is really bragging about her long, slim legs.

It's alright.
I'm an adult.
There is a way for an adult to handle another adult.
There will be a lot of 'spanking' later.

"Let's go, then?"
"I heard that there is a famous labyrinth in Quratar. Even if it's the current me, I will probably be alright."
"We will be entering soon anyway. For now, just follow me."
"Okay."

I add Vesta to my party, and head back to the waiting room.
I can go back to the auction hall, but I pass on that.
I don't want to take Vesta there along with me.
Also, the bidding for the young lady has most likely finished already.

Since the auction is still ongoing, there are less people on the first floor.
That said, there are still a few people in the waiting room.
All of them seem to be adventurers.

Since there's an entrance fee, only party leaders need to participate, huh?
Come to think of it, I always thought of adventurers as masters, but there could also be adventurers who are slaves, too.
It is more probable for an adventurer to be a slave to a wizard than a wizard to be a slave to an adventurer.

I thought of abandoning the idea since there are people around, but if I turned back now, it would seem weird.
I recite the incantation (of [Field Walk]), and use [Warp].
Thus, through the wall of the waiting room, I return home.

Vesta follows after me.
It looks like she has managed to get inside [Warp] without having to lower her head.

"Oh, you came here in one piece."
"Err…"

Vesta has a doubtful expression about her face.
Earlier, after the contract was finalized, I showed Vesta my Intelligence

Card.
So Vesta knows that I am an explorer.

Come to think about it, I never gave it a thought when I used [Warp] to go to the merchants' guild.
What would I do if Alan were there inside the waiting room.
Even if I somehow managed to deceive Alan, I would have lost my winning bid on Vesta had the slave merchant, who brought her along, been there.

Actually, before I even made the bid, wouldn't I have remembered if I had passed by him before somewhere?
It's troublesome for me to walk after having gotten used to [Warp].
I don't suffer much from the lack of exercise since I walk a lot inside the labyrinth.

"This is our home."
At the same time, comes a creaking sound as the door opens.

"I am back."

It is Roxanne's voice.
Had no one been at home, I would have liked to fondle Vesta's two melons.
However, I would be in trouble if she came back while I was in the middle of doing it.

"Welcome home."
"Oh, great. Because I had a feeling that master was home, I hurried back."

Roxanne comes trotting and greets me.
What are you, a dog?
A dog…?

"Let me introduce her to you. She is Vesta. From today, she is one of us."

When Roxanne puts her luggage down, I introduce Vesta to her.
She seems to have just come back from shopping.

"You are so tall. You seem to be reliable."

Roxanne admires Vesta.

“Yes, I would like to be of help in battles. Please take care of me.”
“Likewise. It would be my pleasure working with you.”
“Vesta, She is Roxanne, the number one slave.”
“Number one slave? that’s amazing.”

Is it really that amazing?
I seriously don’t get it.

“Even if you don’t listen to what I say, be sure to listen to Roxanne.”
“Umm, okay.”
“He is a nice master, he never raised his hand on us. Even so, you mustn’t grow arrogant.”
“Yes, I’ll be good.”

If the Sergeant is extremely strict, the commanding officer should wear a smile.
An effective troop management tactic.
If Roxanne is strict with Vesta, then there is no need for me to be strict with her.

It looks like I have made Roxanne assume the role of the ‘villain’.
It’s similar to Roxanne-Miria relation.
I am in Roxanne’s debt even more now.

“I hope you get along well.”
“Yes, Master.”
“Certainly, Master.”

If they don’t become friends, it will be troublesome.
I want it to be peaceful. For my health’s sake, too.

“You are so big and beautiful, as expected of someone my Master chose.”
“Roxanne-san is amazingly beautiful as well.”
“Thank you very much.”

Will it be fine since they are complimenting each other?
It seems she has broken through the first hurdle.

“Excuse me, Master is a explorer, right?”

Like I thought, it's better for me to rest. Vesta asks Roxanne.
Why didn't she ask me directly?

"Apparently."
"But he used what seemed to be [Field Walk]."
"Ah… umm, please just think of Master's job as Master."

That's an absurd pretence.

"Is that so?"
"You can't be surprised by something of this extent. Don't reveal these matters to others, please keep them a secret."

I can leave the rest to Roxanne, I guess.
Vesta's eyes are looking at both of us.
I nod when she looks at me.

"Y-Yes."
"Then, how about the three of us buy what you need?"
"That's a good idea."

Roxanne agrees with my suggestion.
Frankly speaking, I would like to immediately go to the bed.
But it will be better to do it after the bath.
If I do it now, it may be problematic since Sherry and Miria are not around.

"Understood."
"Vesta, what type of weapon do you use?"
"Since I am not that skilled yet, there isn't any weapon I prefer to use. But people of my dragonkin tribe usually wield any weapon with just brute force."

Brute force, huh?
Actually, when I heard the word 'brute force' coming from the top, she did give that feeling.
She is certainly strong.

"Any weapon?"
"It depends on the level of the floor and other equipment, but people of dragonkin tribe often use a sword and a shield. A powerful dragonkin can

equip a two-handed sword in one hand, and a shield in the other one. By equipping the shield, one can increase their defensive capability. Even though I am not that strong yet, I can do that to some extent, too."
"I see. A sword, then?"

It looks like Vesta's offensive power isn't that high.
Well, you don't need to have high offensive power to be a vanguard in our party.
Taking experience points and magic crystal into account, it is more advantageous for me to kill the monsters.

"Or perhaps, I can wield a one-handed sword in one hand and a large shield in the other?"
"I have never seen a large shield before. What about Roxanne?"
"I have seen a big shield with a dragonkin before. Perhaps, that was a large shield?"
"The large shield is only used by people of dragonkin tribe, so it is not widely known."

I've never seen it in Quratar's armor shop.
Maybe he didn't put it on display?
I wonder if Sherry can make it.
I won't know unless I ask her.

"Would I be able to get it if I went to the village where dragonkin live?"
"I am sorry. I don't know where dragonkin live, so I don't know where to get it."
"Is that so?"
"Because both of my parents were slaves."

Upon Vesta's words, I can see tears in Roxanne's eyes.
Because both of their parents were slaves, is that why?
But it doesn't look like Roxanne is surprised.
Maybe because Roxanne is a slave, too?

"……Oh, is that so?"
"I don't know where a dragonkin can get a large shield from."

Vesta doesn't seem to be worried about it, too, and continues to talk.
I wonder if it is not rare for both the parents to be slaves.
It seems to be the case.

Which reminds me, the slave merchant said he bought her when she turned 15.
Was she sold because she turned 15?
I wonder if she became a slave because both her parents were slaves.
Whatever, it is her first year as a slave.
It's regrettable but I understand.

"Well, it can't be helped, then."
"If I can acquire my racial job, Dragon Knight, I can wield a two-handed sword in one hand, and a large shield in the other hand. There are also dragon knights who wield a two-handed sword in each hand."
"Dual wielding?"
"Yes, it is called dual wielding, apparently."

As expected of a job a chuuni would dig.
It doesn't look like they can ride a dragon or shoot with a gun, though.
"Regarding armor, since you have brute force, is chainmail fine?"
"Yes, I think it will be fine. Also, females of the dragonkin tribe can also equip platemail. We don't seem to get tired while wearing a platemail. But not many females outside the dragonkin tribe can wear it."
"Well, I think it would be better to ask Sherry about the equipment that would be good for you."
"Okay."

Vesta looks a little puzzled, but nods.
It's obvious that she didn't understand what I meant by 'Sherry'.

"Sherry is a knowledgeable dwarf. She knows a lot about equipment, and also about party formations and battle strategies. Nothing can go wrong if you leave it to Sherry."

While I was lost in thought, Roxanne explains it.
Nicely followed up.

"Is that so?"
"Then, sit down on a chair, and show me your ankle."
"My ankle?"

Even though she was confused, Vesta sits obediently on a chair.
I take her shoes off, rest her leg on the chair, and pull the hem of her trousers above her ankle.

Even when she's seated, Vesta looks big.
Also, she seemed embarrassed as I touched her.
I will do plenty of that later, of course.
I take out a Sacrificial Misanga from my Item Box.
Since it was a piece of equipment with a skill attached, I had it inside my Item Box instead of the storeroom.
I feel like an idiot for occupying one slot inside my Item Box with it.
It is free now.

"It is a piece of equipment made by Sherry."

I bind the Sacrificial Misanga on Vesta's ankle.
Compared to her body, Vesta's leg is not particularly large.
Her ankle is slim and tight.

There is something similar to scales on her foot, but they are not hard.
Apparently, the scales exist on her feet. Above the ankles, however, they look just like normal, human legs.
It really is a smooth leg.

I am not particularly uncomfortable with its color.
Healthy, light brown is sexy.
I don't feel like going to the shop. I wanna go straight to the bed.

Chapter 123 - Because it's Master

"Did she make it herself?"

While I was binding the Sacrificial Misanga, Vesta asks from the top.

"Sherry is a master smith."
"She's a master smith… sama?"

Vesta says in a strange manner.
A sama that's not exactly sama.

"That's right, but stop with this sama"
"Eh? Umm, is that fine, Roxanne-sama?"

Vesta looks toward Roxanne and asks.
She is again being overly courteous.

"Please call me Roxanne. Both Sherry and I are Master's slaves like you."
Un
That's the normal reaction.
Had Roxanne proposed calling Roxanne-sama and Sherry-sama, a punishment would have been in order.

"Are you slaves, really?"
"Yes."
"How can a master smith be a slave? For us, the dragonkin tribe, the auction is really a great place to be sold at, and because of that, we are taught to properly serve. But for a master smith to be a slave…"

Which reminds me, I was told before that it is hard to get a master smith.
It is really amazing to have a master smith as a slave.
And probably, they will fetch more than Vesta if put on the auction.

And what does Roxanne being the number one slave in such an amazing place mean?
That will make her sama, surely.
Won't it?

Is being the number one perhaps a source of pride in this world?
Or a source of pride amongst slaves?
Which means, it is the same for our house.

It is necessary to have a set of good equipment, but ordinary slaves don't get to have one.
When you use slaves, you can blaze through the labyrinth. Consequently, the income from the labyrinth increases.
Considering this, Roxanne will surely be called sama.

"Well, just don't act so formal."

I stand back up once I finish binding the Sacrificial Misanga.
I lightly pat Vesta's shoulder.
When I thought about patting her head, I felt embarrassed.
Because she's taller than me.

"Okay. So this misanga was made by Sherry, right? and you are collecting them?"
"It is not like I am collecting them."
"Then, is there some reason behind keeping it?"

Vesta asks persistently.

"No particular reason. It is just a precaution."
"Is that… so?"
"This is a Sacrificial Misanga."

Roxanne explains to Vesta.
I see.
So she was wondering what use equipping an ordinary misanga is.
She didn't expect Sherry to make a Sacrificial Misanga, I guess.

"Oh well, it's alright. It's to protect you."
"Eeh? Is this really a Sacrificial Misanga?"

Vesta is shocked.

“It really is a Sacrificial Misanga.”
“I heard it’s a very valuable accessory. I remember my former master trying desperately to get one.”
“Very valuable, you say?”
“Yes, I never saw one until I came to Master’s place. Ordinary slaves can not afford to have such a piece of equipment.”

Roxanne confirms Vesta’s words when I look at her.
For me, it’s merely attaching a skill to a piece of equipment.

“I see.”
“Is it alright for me to wear such a precious thing?”
“It’s fine.”
“Is it, really?”

I don’t know how much a Sacrificial Misanga costs, but I’m sure Vesta’s cost is higher.
If a cheap Sacrificial Misanga can prevent me from losing the more expensive Vesta, It’s better for her to equip it.
It’s rational.
If it’s a norm in this world to not allow a slave to wear a Sacrificial Misanga, then what I am doing is an out-of-the-box idea, I guess.

It is quite rational.
I am certain that Sherry will approve of it.
This slave’s price, however, is higher than that slave’s price. I hope it won’t lead to conflict.

“It’s fine because it’s Master.”

Roxanne seem to support my idea, too.
There is no problem, then.

“Then, does Roxanne-san have one, too?”
“Yes, I have it already.”

Roxanne pulls the hem of her trouser up.
She shows her Sacrificial Misanga to Vesta.

The misanga is tied on her gorgeous foot. It's making her ankle shine.
Should I head to the bed with them both right now?

"Ok, wait here a minute."
"Okay. Umm, thank you very much."

Vesta bows down.
I'm not going to the bedroom but the storeroom.
I take out an Iron sword.

"For the time being, keep this sword."

When I return to the living room, I pass the sword to Vesta.
I usually hang a steel sword on my waist, but I don't really use it in the labyrinth.
If Vesta is going to use a two-handed sword, then it's obvious that she is going to use the steel sword.
But, if I give Vesta the steel sword, I will be carrying the Iron sword. Which means, Vesta's equipment will be better.
That will probably not be a good idea.

"Okay. Umm…"

Vesta anxiously looks toward Roxanne.
I don't see any problem. This Iron sword is of lower tier compared to my steel sword.

"It's fine. Because it's Master."

It seems to be alright.

"Let's go, then?"

We are going out shopping.
Facing a wall in the living room, I cast Warp.
This is the second time, so I hope Vesta won't have any problem.
I jump to the adventurers' guild.

"Yes."

Roxanne and Vesta follow after me.
It looks like Vesta is still surprised, but she is keeping quiet, at least.
Good girl.

“Where are we going now?”
“If we are not going to the weapons shop or the armor shop, then we should go to the grocery store first. I think it will be best to save the clothing store for last.”

After stepping out of the adventurers’ guild, Roxanne says.
So the clothing store is for last, huh? She seems to be suggesting that it will take long.
Oh well, that’s fine, I guess.

“If it’s about my clothes, I already have clothes.”
“You will need a change of clothes, too.”

I reject Vesta’s suggestion.

“It’s fine, because it’s Master.”

Roxanne’s way of persuading her sounds funny.

We go to the grocery store first.
We look around for various items.
It’s okay to leave this matter to Roxanne.

“This backpack, is it small?”
“I think so.”
“Is that so?”

Regarding the backpack, it is the same, normal-sized backpack we are using but it looked like it would snap any moment.
It doesn’t fit the big Vesta.

“How about a large one?”
“That would be better.”
“Yes, I think it will be better.”

We pick a large backpack.
Since it is large, it should be able to hold more items. However, the burden of carrying it will be greater.
Forgive me for doing this, please.
That said, it's a perfect fit, and it looks good on Vesta's shoulders.
Sherry, on the other hand, looks like she's climbing a mountain, carrying a large bag on her back.

"I apologize for this."

We purchase the backpack, a cup, a shiyukure branch, and various other items from the grocery store.

We put everything we bought just now inside the backpack.
The backpack is being carried by Vesta.

"Excuse me, I would like to buy this."

When I was paying the amount, Roxanne hands something to the shop clerk.

"Did we forget to buy something?"
"No, this is for me."
"I see."

Roxanne pays for it herself.
It seemed to be one silver coin.

"This brush is a present from me."
"Wah, thank you very much."
"I am glad I still had some money left. Today, I also bought something for Miria and Sherry, too."

So it was a hair brush?
Roxanne shows it to Vesta for an instant, then puts it in Vesta's backpack.
We head to the clothing store next.

"Do you have clothes of her size?"
"Yes, we do."

After I asked the shop clerk, we were led to the inner part of the shop.
They seem to have clothes for her.

“These?”
“They will become fairly large when worn.”
“They will?”
“We don’t have many customers from the dragonkin tribe, so we don’t have much variety.”

I don’t know how far this inner part extends, but there seems to be a fair number of clothes.
Is it similar to how dwarven adults wear childrenswear?
The male slave from the dragonkin tribe was huge, too, so I guess all the dragonkin are tall.

“With these many, it’s not bad, at all.”

Roxanne steps forward.
Roxanne’s eyes seemed to flash when we heard there were not that many.
Do you really plan on going through all of them?
If clothes were allowed to be tried in this world, it would be a great hit.

“Three each of these two, please.”

Because I felt sorry for the shop clerk, I show him that I’m actually a buying customer.
He will not complain if I buy.

“I understand. Vesta, look here.”
“Is it alright for me to get so many?”
“It’s alright.”

I urge Vesta to move by pushing her shoulders.
Roxanne’s struggles with the clothes had already started.
Roxanne carefully examines every piece herself, then checks how it looks on Vesta.

“Maybe something like this?”
“Yes, it looks great.”

“How about this one?”
“Yeah, It is lovely.”

Both of them are choosing excitedly.
I am patiently watching.
The shop clerk is watching helplessly, too.
I occasionally share my opinion from a distance.

“This one, and this. Then, how about this one?”
“Yes. It’s alright, I think.”
“Then, can I have this one as well, please?”

This time, they choose it without asking me for my opinion, thankfully.
Once they finish choosing, I pay the amount.
I bought them at a generous, 30% discount.

We put the clothes in Vesta’s backpack.
Large size is quite convenient.

“Thank you very much.”

Vesta bows again when we leave the store.

“Glad you like it.”
“Yes. But this dress is brand new, don’t you think so?”
“Seems like it.”
“I-I can’t have you buy new clothes for me.”
“It’s fine. Because it’s Master.”

While walking, I overhear the conversation between the two.
It looks like used clothes are sold, too.
The people who wear new clothes seem to be less than I thought.
After having gone to the grocery store and the clothing store, next is buying ingredients for dinner.

“Vesta, can you cook?”
“I can cook something simple for myself, I think.”
“Something simple?”

I wonder how much she eats.
I shouldn't expect too much since she doesn't look that confident in her skills.
Maybe eggs or probably rice?

"As for me, I can cook for everyone."
"For everyone? I am not confident in my skills to cook for everyone."
"Let see… how about you first try to make one dish?"
"Umm, I don't think I can make something to Master's liking. I can only make soup with potatoes and leftover vegetables, or stew mixed with bread crust."

Comes a disappointing reply, even though I was expecting a motivated answer.
Since both her parents are slaves, she doesn't have any confidence, is that the reason?
Stew mixed with bread crust?
Actually, it sounds somewhat delicious.

If I think about it, may be everything so far has been going extraordinarily well?
Roxanne can cook. Sherry had a rich grandfather. Miria's life centres around fish.
It would be too much for a daughter of two slaves, who was herself sold into slavery, to be expected to cook as well.

"Then, can someone help me and Vesta when we cook later."
"Yes, I'll be able to, I think."
"Then, can you please make soup today, Roxanne?"
"Certainly."

I have no idea how many fish Miria managed to catch. I'm also not sure if she hasn't eaten them all already. For this reason, I am making additional preparation.
I'm sure, Miria will cook the fish she catches herself.
So, leaving the fish for Miria, should I cook some meat?
Grilled rabbit meat would do.

I have some rabbit meat inside my Item Box.
As to how much I should cook, it will decide it later, depending on Miria's

catch.
I also need to buy other ingredients, such as vegetables.

“I guess you eat a lot, Vesta, no?”

I ask her while picking up bread in the bakery.
I guess it would be better to buy more bread.

“Since I was called a cockroach all the time, I think I’ll be fine.”
“I-Is that so?”

I wonder who that person is who said that.
Slaves’ kids really have it tough, it seems.
I don’t know when I may step on a landmine, but I get it.

Well, since she maintains that she’ll be fine, even though she was called a cockroach, she will probably be fine.
Actually, a cockroach’s vitality is incredibly high, so it can also be taken as a compliment.
Even I was called a cockroach in the past…
It reminds me of hateful memories.

“This much should be enough.”

I purchase the bread per Roxanne’s advice.
I bought more than usual for there’s one more person now.
Would this much really be enough?
“It looks so soft and delicious. Can I really have the leftovers?”
Vesta asks Roxanne when we step out of the bakery.

“Everyone here eats together. Please eat without hesitation.”
“Wah, is it really okay?”
“It’s fine, because it’s Master.”

Is Roxanne really trying to persuade her like this?
I don’t even have the energy to follow up anymore.

“Since we enter the labyrinth, we need to take care of our health.”

To escape from this, I go inside the adventurers' guild, cast Warp, and return home.

Chapter 124 - Breath

“I will be preparing the bath, then. Please take care of Vesta.”

After arriving at home, I escape to the bathroom.
I entrust Roxanne with Vesta.
However, the two of them come running after me.

“Master, if I may, please.”
“What’s wrong?”
“Vesta said she doesn’t know what a bath is.”

Did you come to see the bath?
Well, if you’ve no problem with it, I don’t have any problem either.

“You don’t know what a bath is?”
“I am sorry. I have never seen one before.”
“This is the bath.”
“We submerge ourselves in a tub filled with hot water. It seems to be a luxury only nobles can afford to enjoy.”

Roxanne explains it to Vesta.
Since it is something reserved for nobles, there is no helping if she doesn’t know about it.
You would of course want to see it if you never saw it before.

“Is that so?”
“My only concern is that if Vesta joins in, it may be a bit small.”

Vesta freezes.
Don’t tell me she doesn’t plan on going in.

“Well, I intend to have you join in. Don’t tell me you don’t like a bath?”
“A bath is something only nobles can enjoy, isn’t that right?”

“It’s alright.”
“It’s fine. Because he’s Master.”

Does she still have something to say?

“Is it really alright?”
“There’s no problem. It will be a little small, however, since everyone is going to join in.”
“Okay. I think it will be alright.”

I am glad.
Looks like Vesta will be joining in with everyone.
‘With everyone’ is the most important part.

When I say ‘with everyone’, it is different from when I say ‘with me’.
That’s wonderful.
I can hardly wait.
It is frustrating, though, that I can’t go in right now.

“Then, I will start preparing it, so you can have a look.”

Instead, I decide to show her how I prepare the bath.
I cast [Water Wall].
The water starts filling the buckets I arranged on the floor of the bathroom.
It is a wall of water made by magic.

When I cast [Water Wall], Vesta let’s out a surprised sound.

“What do you think?”

Cool, no?
I must really look cool right now.
Vesta must really be full of respect toward me right now.
I must really look like a chuuni king.

“Amazing.”

Vesta is surprised.

“That’s right, that’s right.”
“Because he’s Master.”
“It’s my first time seeing someone from a tribe that can produce water.”

Eh?
Her line of thought is wayward.

“What do you mean by ‘tribe’?”
“Is it something different?”
“This is magic.”
“But Master’s job is not Wizard but you’re an explorer… ah, is that perhaps the job you call Master?”

She has already been inspired by Roxanne.
I wonder if it’s alright to leave it at that.

“Yes, it is. Because he’s Master.”

Instead of a confirmation from me, she is looking for confirmation from Roxanne.

“Is that so? Amazing.”
“Is there a tribe that can produce water?”

Is there really a tribe that can produce water?
Merman, maybe?
It is terrifying that there’s such a possibility in this world.
Well, there already are monsters that attack using water.

“I don’t know if there is a tribe that can produce water, but those from the dragonkin tribe can make fire.”
“Eh? Really?”
“Yes.”

As you would expect from a tribe that has such a cool chuuni name.
Because they are from the dragonkin tribe, is that why they can breathe fire?
That’s great.

They are on a completely different level of chuunibyou compared to someone like me who merely uses magic.
Just like a chuunibyou that manifests on the first day after summer vacation.
Matured over the vacation after experiencing the heat of the summer and all that resolution bullshit.

Compared to that, my chuunibyou is at a level of someone who experienced the opening ceremony for the first time.
I am barely a chuuni.
The most I can do is look down upon other freshmen.
I understand, yet I don't.

"Is it okay to show it to me?"
"It's okay. It is not that big a deal."
"Can you heat the water in the jars using your fire, please?"

I point to the jars filled with water.
If it goes well, it will become easier to prepare the bath in the future.

"I don't think it is possible to heat them."
"Is that so?"
"I can try, though."

It doesn't look like it will become easier.
Vesta steps inside the bathroom, and stands in front of the jars.
She bends down, and brings her face closer to the jars.
She blows fire from her mouth.

"Ooh"

Wow.
The flame sticks to the water surface.

"I can make about this much. It is a skill which is normally used to attract enemy's attention. Continuous use is not possible."
"I see. Still, It's amazing."
"Thank you very much."

The flame goes out in a few seconds.
It didn't persist for long.
It felt like a fire dancer dancing with a torch.
It can be used for a street performance.

"Huh? Can't everyone from the dragonkin tribe become a wizard since they can produce fire?"

If you can use magic, you can become a wizard.
Ordinary people, who can't use magic, can't become a wizard. However, since dragonkin can breathe fire, shouldn't they be able to become a wizard?

But when I checked Vesta's status, she didn't have the Wizard job.
Maybe she didn't use fire breath before?
Nope. Maybe she needs to be a Villager Lv5 first?
Or maybe, even if you can use magic, since it is not enough to deal a death blow, it is not considered adequate. This can be a possibility.

"It looks like it is different from a wizard's magic. Even a dragonkin can't become a wizard unless they use medicine at a young age. Master is more amazing since he can use magic."
"It's different?"

I wonder how it is different.
Can breathing fire not become an amazing magic attack?
I will consult Sherry later.
I cast [Fireball] to heat up the water.

"Wow. Really amazing."

Vesta stayed for a while, but eventually went back to the kitchen with Roxanne.
I head to the kitchen after I was halfway done with the preparation of the bath.
Roxanne is boiling soup.

"Ah, are you going to the labyrinth?"
"…No, just taking a break."
"Is that so?"

She didn't come to me to light the fire, how is it already lit?
Ah, if I think about it, can't Vesta light fire?

As Roxanne said, I wanted to go to the labyrinth. However, because fire has been lit, someone needs to stay here and keep watch over it.
Since I need Roxanne to guide me, I can't leave her here, and I would be uneasy if I left Vesta alone.
I don't think she will run away, but in case anything happens.
Even if Vesta does not intend to escape, there might be a temptation if she were left alone on the first day.

I would hate it if she escaped without me doing her first.
If she wants to escape, she can wait till tomorrow, at least.
Miria is currently alone. However, since she can eat fish, there is no chance for her to escape.

"Vesta, can you wash these and cut them to a size that is easy to eat?"
I change my plan, and hand Vesta the vegetables.
Tonight's dinner will be tempura. If Miria manages to catch fish, that is.

"Certainly."
"Cut these mushrooms in half. We will fry them for dinner. You can look forward to it."
"It'll be wonderful."

If I say it like this, she will not run away before dinner.
I go back to the bathroom, and prepare the bath some more.
Stealthily from the bathroom, I head to Quratar's 7th floor, and recover my MP.

It took longer with just one person, but there was no problem.
Luckily, I got rabbit meat. Therefore, even if Miria fails to catch anything, there will be no problem.
After having finished preparing the bath, I head to the kitchen.

"Once the soup is done, can you please put the fire out and we'll go and pick Sherry up."

After having finished preparations for tonight's dinner, the three of us go to the library.

We jump to the lobby in the library, and walk halfway inside.
Sherry immediately finds us, and comes out.

“Drop dead.”

Sherry’s lip movement suggests so, but it must be my imagination.
I don’t know exactly what she said because her lip movement suggested it to be Brahim.
It’s an illusion.
By chance, is it possible to translate the lip movement?

“S-Sherry, she is Vesta. From today, she is a friend.”
“Drop dead… ah, are you perhaps from the dragonkin tribe?”
“Yes, I am. Please take care of me.”
“Is that so? Alright, please treat me well, too.”

What was that?
Sherry suddenly became gentler.
It would be a good thing, though, if both of them were to have a good relationship.

“Vesta. This faint smell of liquor is coming from Sherry.”
“Okay.”
“Here is the deposit money.”

Sherry passes the gold coin to me.
She looks at me with eyes sharp as a bird’s.
There’s something wrong, after all.

“I ask of you to take care of her.”
“Of course, especially from a certain bad guy who is only interested in the large chest of a female dragonkin.”
“Is that so?”
“Yes. Anyone who ogles them should just drop dead. It is not the female dragonkin’s fault. Dragonkin don’t breastfeed their children. Female dragonkin’s breasts are filled with air, they are just airbags.”

Airbags?
My hope, my dreams shattered just like that.

“Really?”
“The breasts of the females from the dragonkin tribe receive unfair treatment.”
“I see.”
“Because dragonkin females have a large chest, it’s normal for them to be made fun of, that they’re filled with air. It’s alright, though.”

Vesta takes over and explains.
Only dragonkin females are made fun of because they have a large chest? So it would be okay if Sherry had a big chest?
She seems to have a chest size complex.

“No, there’s no problem with Vesta, at all. It is the guys, that only care about a large chest, who should drop dead.”

Sherry tries to cheer her up.
It’s a rare sight.
A child comforting an adult.
If you look at Vesta and Sherry standing side by side, they look like a pair of aliens.

“Well then, let’s go to Hafen and pick up Miria?”
“Yes.”

I didn’t jump inside Hafen, but to the forest which is close to the seashore.
Miria is still at the reef.
There seem to be other people, too.
She seems to have attracted attention.

“How is it, Miria? Did you manage to catch anything?”
“Yes, desu.”

Miria responds joyfully.
It looks like she got a great catch.
Because she got a great catch, is that why she attracted attention?
Her clothes don’t seem to be wet.
It doesn’t look like she entered the sea.

“Let’s go, then?”
“Yes, desu. But…”

“She is saying she would like to share some of the fish with the others. It looks like she received their assistance in fishing.”

Miria says something. Roxanne translates what she said.
She wants to share the fish she caught with the others?
Miria seems to have grown up.

“It is Miria’s catch, after all. I don’t mind.”

“Okay, desu.”
“I am planning on making tempura, the dish we made the other day. I thought you should know, so you can share the fish that won’t be of our use.”
“Will do, desu.”

Miria lifts her rod, and heads toward the basket.
She is planning on eating them, after all.

Moderate number of fish were inside the basket.
There are several kinds of fishes inside, ranging from big to small.
She doesn’t know the concept of ‘catch and release’.

“It looks like Miria can see the movement of the fish. They are saying that she is an amazing fisherman.”
“Understand the feeling of the fish to catch it, desu.”

Miria is distributing the fish. She is receiving appreciation from the people surrounding her.
She is being treated like a fishing grandmaster.
Well, her attachment to the fish is extreme, after all.
When they had received the fish, the people surrounding her left.

“Miria, this is Vesta. From now on, she is a friend.”
“Please take care of me.”

After everyone disappears, I introduce Vesta to her.
Vesta bows her head.

“Miria, desu.”
“Vesta, she is Miria.”
“Onee-chan, desu.”

Miria sticks her chest out proudly.
Or perhaps, she stuck her chest out to buff her upper body, so that Vesta would look up to her?
I did tell her to treat Roxanne as her older sister.
I wonder if it makes Vesta the younger sister since she only just joined.

“Yes.”
“Call me Onee-chan, desu.”
“Onee-chan.”
“Vesta, desu.”

Miria stretches her hand out and pats Vesta’s head.
It’s not like her hand didn’t reach, but it looked kinda funny.
Miria tiptoeing and trying her best to stretch out looked heartwarming.

Sherry probably would not reach, though, even if she tried.
Earlier, when I tried to pat her head gently to comfort her, I couldn’t.

“For the time being, the five of us are the party members. In the future, however, the number will increase further.”

I declare my intention to expand harem, so that Vesta knows, too.
Beginning is always critical.
The other three hear it as well.

“Okay.”
“Good. Let’s go home and make dinner, then?”

Seeing Vesta nod her head, I decide to head back home.
We first wait for Miria to tidy up her fishing tools and then head to the forest where I cast [Warp].
Vesta is carrying the basket while Sherry is holding the colander.
I have Miria put the fishing gear in the storeroom.
“Have put it in, desu.”

“Then, can I ask of you to cook the fish, Miria?”
“Yes, desu.”

The quantity of the fish she is cooking is more than five people’s fill.
Is she perhaps cooking more because she’ll be eating a lot?
I don’t think there’s a need to make grilled rabbit meat now.

“I will warm the soup, then. Can you please help, Vesta?”
“Yes.”

Vesta breathes fire and lights the wood.
Seeing it is great as ever.

“Apparently, it is not magic. Do you know about it?”
“Dragonkin can store a gas which can be burnt in a portion of their body. The gas itself is inflammable. Since you can light it even if you are not from the dragonkin tribe, it is not considered magic.”

I ask Sherry. She explains it to me.
Like methane gas?
Because you can light up the gas, it’s indeed not magic.
It’s a chemical reaction.
No wonder she is not a wizard.
I wonder how they light it up, though.

“Huh? Is that so?”

Somehow, even the person in question has a surprised expression about their face.

“As expected of Sherry. You know it all.”
“Thank you very much.”
“Sherry, can you warm the oil on the table, please?”
“Certainly.”

I ask of Sherry to do some work.
Apparently, she is not drunk, so she should be alright.
I pass a lemon to Vesta.

“Vesta, squeeze it.”
“Okay.”
“We will use it with the food, so.”

I prepare the coating.
Thereafter, I cut the rabbit meat into bite-sized pieces.
After cutting it, I pre-cook it with salt and pepper.
Because there is plenty of fish, it’ll be better to have some meat alongside tempura.

Chapter 125 - Pafupafu

We put all the dishes on the dining table and take our seats.
Vesta sits right next to me.
I pour the soup in order.
The last one to receive some was Vesta.

“S-Sorry. Is this really okay?”
“It’s alright. Then, let’s start eating. Miria, do you have any recommendation regarding the fish?”
“Haddatts, desu.”
“Then, I will try it first.”

Miria points at a fish fillet, coated. She puts it in the saucepan.
Delicious ‘Juwa～’ sound resounds.
It looks good. I hope it tastes equally good.

“I think this fish is called Barudea.”

Sherry informs me. It is a fish that doesn’t exist on Earth, I think.
I don’t really care whether or not there is a translation or a Brahim equivalent for it.

“Roxanne, which one do you want?”
“I would like the same one as Master, please.”
“Sherry?”
“Barudea as well, please.”

It seems to be quite popular.
I put their shares in the saucepan.
Do I even need to ask Miria?

“Haddatts, desu.”

For it to have two names is really confusing.

“The name is Barudea. Barudea.”
“Barudea, desu.”
“Is it Barudea?”
“Do you know about it?”

Vesta mutters, so I confirm with her.
Vesta is looking curiously at the tempura saucepan.

“Yes, I heard it is a very delicious fish.”
“Then, why don’t you try it, too, Vesta?”
“Is it alright?”
“It is alright.”

After putting Roxanne’s, Sherry’s and Miria’s fillets in the saucepan, I take out mine.
Because there is no wire mesh, I drain the oil the best I can and take a bite.
My manner may be unsightly for I’m using the chopsticks (to drain the oil).
Hot.

“To sit at the same table as Master, to eat the same food; is this really alright?”
“It’s fine. Because he’s Master.”
“Master, thank you.”
“You should rather thank Miria, who caught them. They really are tasty.”

Crunchy coating.
Delicious, springy meat inside.
This fish really tastes great.

“Onee-chan, thank you very much.”
“Onee-chan, desu.”

Miria repeats proudly.
She coats Vesta’s share of fish and puts it in the saucepan.
Thereafter, I take out the fillets of the three using the chopsticks and drain the oil before putting it in their platters.

“Delicious.”
“It is even more delicious than Barudea I ate back in the days.”
“Delicious, desu.”

Quite popular, it seems.
Lastly, I put Vesta's fillet in her platter.

"I have never eaten such a delicious thing. Thank you very much, Master. Thank you very much, Onee-chan."
"Onee-chan, desu."

I wonder if she knows what 'Onee-chan' really means.

"Then, should we try mushroom next?"

I put the fried mushroom in Vesta's wooden bowl.
It may be different from the shiitake mushroom last time; but this mushroom is delicious, too, nonetheless.

"I would like the mushroom, too."
"Then, I would like the rabbit meat, please."
"Barudea, desu."

You guys trying to act important, eh?

"What do you want to try next?"

I ask Vesta while putting the fried mushroom in her wooden bowl.

"Eh? Is it okay for me to choose?"
"If you have never eaten it before, I recommend you to try clams."
"Clam? What is that?"
"A really delicious food."

Roxanne recommends it as well.
Since Clamshells appear frequently on Haruba's 18th Floor, my Item Box is full of clams.

"At my former master's place, they used to make clam broth on special days. It surely was delicious, but I didn't know that it is possible to eat the clam itself. If it is alright, can I have clam, then?"

I wonder why she was not given the boiled clams.
Is it perhaps possible for the soup to be delicious without it?

But never have I heard before about discarding the clams after making the soup.

“Onee-chan, too, didn’t eat good food before coming to Master’s place, desu.”
“Is that so?”
“Delicious, desu.”
“I look forward to it.”

Half of Miria’s remark didn’t get through.
It is not bad, though.

While picking up a mushroom and putting it in my mouth, I coat a clam and put it in the saucepan.
Thereafter, I put a mushroom in Roxanne’s platter, and a piece of rabbit meat in Sherry’s.
Now that I think about it, this is the first time I made rabbit meat tempura.
I should take responsibility and try it, too.
Hence, I put a piece of rabbit meat in my wooden bowl.

“I will be trying this next. How is it, Sherry? Is it good?”
“Yes, it’s delicious.”
“Really?”
“Then, I would like to have a piece of rabbit meat, too, please.”

I knew it would be like this, so I had already coated two.
Miria places fish above everything else, so she unsurprisingly ignores the rabbit meat.
I put a clam in Vesta’s platter.

“This is… this is really delicious. I didn’t know it would be this good.”
“Glad you like it.”
“Yes, Roxanne-san.”

Vesta seems to be delighted with the clam.

“What would you like next, Sherry?”
“I would like to try this vegetable.”
“This fish, desu.”

I can't predict what these two would choose, at all.
Because Miria caught various types of fish.

"Vesta, what would you like next?"
"Umm, can I really choose? Hmm… what should I get, then? Let me see…
Then, I would like the same food as Master."

Vesta orders fried rabbit meat.
Including Roxanne's order makes it two.

"Got it."
"It really is great to be able to choose what to eat. All of these are so delicious. I seem to have been purchased by a great person, certainly."

I had no idea she will be deeply affected like this.

"Don't cry…"
"Yes. I am sorry."
"Here, you can have some bread."
"The soft bread from before… to be able to eat it, too…"

It made her cry even more.
It was not the right thing to do.
Vesta is gradually becoming Roxanne version 2.
She is eating the same food as me.
Even though she can choose whatever she likes.

However, the freedom of choice ends now.

"Alright then, how about we enter the bath?"

Now that we are done with eating, and the dishes have been cleaned up, it is time for the main (forced) event.
There is no way out.

"Okay."

Roxanne, Sherry and Miria start undressing as they are used to it by now.
Oh
Roxanne's big mountains pop out the moment she removes her shirt. Sherry

is cute as always. And it is hard to leave Miria's body out.
When there are cat ears and tail, the level of joy jumps up 10 times.
I can't pick one.
I am glad from the bottom of my heart that I am their master.
They are wonderful.

Vesta takes off her shirt, revealing her large body.
Huge melons. More like basket balls.
Really huge.
Even bigger than Roxanne's.

Large. Intense. Strong.

O-Outrageous.
Not allowed.
It will not be tolerated.
They must be wrecked.

Then, let's wreck them.
With these hands.
With this tongue.
What's left is to add some salt.

We enter the bathroom. First, I wash Roxanne's body.
I cover her whole body with foam, then wash it thoroughly.
I firmly wash her sacred mountains.
They always feel great, no matter how many time I do them.

"Roxanne-san, what is that?"
"It is soap. When Master will wash your body, you will feel good."
"I will be washed?"

It will be I who'll feel good, though.
Of Course, I have every intention of carefully washing Vesta's body.
She doesn't have a choice.
With Vesta standing in the middle with her large body, the bathroom felt over-populated. Even so, I am happy.

"Next is Sherry."

It's time to wash Sherry's lovely body.
Today is the day I am supposed to wash Roxanne's hair, but I will postpone it for now.
I remember that soap is not good for hair, so it is better to wash their hair once every three days.
It would become greasy if it were to be left alone for long. So, If it's this much, it'll be fine.

I wash every nook and cranny of Sherry's small body.
Rubbing her petite body, I feel like I am doing something forbidden.
Whatever, it feels great.

Because her body is small, her breasts feel good, even though they're small.
I don't need to be humble.

Miria is next.
I wash her slowly and carefully in order to fully enjoy it.
The cute Miria obediently settles in my arms.

"Wash, desu."
"Alright. Lastly, it's Vesta's turn."
"Okay."

Vesta comes in front of me.
Huge.
Basket Balls right in front of my eyes.
First, I cover her with foam.
I though they'll will be saggy considering how big they are, but they are quite firm.
They are more elastic than I imagined. To the point that they pushed my finger back.
So very supple.

They're full of meat and fat, of course, but not hard at all.
I bend down in the middle of washing her, and sink my face until it was halfway in.
Not too hard, not too soft.
I won't get bored in here.

I wash the rest of her body since I got scared of the eyes on me as I was only washing her breasts.

I cover the whole of Vesta's large body with foam, and wash it thoroughly.
The color of her skin is light brown, so it doesn't seem to have tanned.

I place one of my hands on her chest, and stretch her arm to wash it.
Sometimes, I grab it with both my hands.
Wow, amazing.

What is it filled with?
Is it filled with dreams and hopes?
If I remember correctly, it's filled with air.
If I am not mistaken, she said something about air sac.

But which air sac?
Function?
Farm?
Or air sac? (TN: This is a play on kanji. All three have different kanji but they're pronounced as 'kinou')

"Vesta, try to inhale air."
"Okay."
"Exhale."
"…"
"Inhale once again."
"…"

I don't fully understand it, but examining it closely, I kind of get it.
When inhaling, her right breast becomes larger; when exhaling, her left breast becomes smaller.
They're definitely air sacs.
There are air sacs inside.

"Huh? Even if there are air sacs inside, why is the large chest of a dragonkin female called useless?"
"Because there's only useless air inside."

Is that really the reason?

"Is that really so?"
"The dragonkin females with large chest are not at fault."

I try to confirm with Sherry if that is the only reason.
Because they don't seem to be able to produce milk, they are unable to breastfeed, unlike human females.
However, she does have nipples (or so they look like) on her breasts.
Are they only for show?

"Because of the air sacs inside, the larger their breasts, the greater their athletic ability."
"Really?"
"The great athletic ability of the dragonkin is due to the air sacs inside their chest."
"It is just the air that goes in."

Hearing Sherry say things like that, I don't think she really fully knows the functionality of the air sacs.

"We, human beings, inhale air directly into our lungs. It goes out from the lungs when we exhale. In fact, it is somewhat inefficient. They, however, have two air sacs. When they inhale, the air enters the right air sac. When they exhale, the air goes out from the left one. The air flows in one way, from right air sac to the left air sac, so they can actually breathe air more efficiently."

I remember what I learned in biology class about birds and use it to explain.
However, it wasn't left and right in case of birds, but front and back.
The birds have higher air capacity thanks to the air sacs.
And thanks to that, they can fly high in the sky.

"To know such a thing, as expected of Master."
"Regarding the efficiency being low, I really don't get it."
"Amazing, desu."
"Is that so?"

Even though Vesta, who belongs to the dragonkin tribe, is nodding; Sherry is not convinced.
Sherry is a formidable adversary, after all.

"In case of human beings; since air is breathed in and out from the lungs, it is easy for the stale air to remain inside the lungs alongside the fresh air."
"I don't think it has anything to do with stale or fresh air."

Sherry looks puzzled.
Haemoglobin, oxygen, carbon dioxide; she doesn't know about any of those, of course.
How should I persuade her?

"Then, think of it like this. Put some water in a tub, and start moving it up and down. After that, put some water inside a tube, which is open at both ends. The cylinder will be more efficient as more water will be able to flow inside per unit of time."
"That may well be true. Mumumu"

If she doesn't know about the basic function of the fresh air, it's not possible for her to understand it.
Sherry's face looks troubled. I will try to deceive her forcibly.

"Due to the breathing efficiency thanks to the air sacs, dragonkin are highly athletic. The larger the air sac, the more the air goes in. With this, the concept that dragonkin females with larger chest have greater athletic ability can be explained."
"Is that so? Even though I am from the dragonkin tribe, I never heard about this before."

I need to make Vesta understand that having large chest is not a bad thing.
Not a bad thing, at all.
Actually, It can't be more wonderful than this.

"As expected of Master."
"You can feel the air going out of the sac if you touch it."

I urge Roxanne to try.

"Well. Are you okay with this, Vesta?"
"Yes, go ahead."

Roxanne stretches her hand, and touches Vesta's chest.
The atmosphere has, somehow, turned lewd.
Lovely.
Roxanne's soft hands gently touch Vesta's breasts.

This is bad.
She bends forward on her.

“S-So, before I wash your hair, can you wash my body?”
“Certainly. It does feel like air is coming in when she inhales.”

It was okay for Roxanne to do what she wanted to Vesta’s body, it seems.

“Yes. Is it okay for me to wash Master’s body?”
“Yes, it is. All of us will be washing Master’s body.”
“Understood.”

Vesta turns around and kneels down in front of me.
Roxanne rubs my shoulders, while Vesta approaches me with her kneeled body.
No way.
Pafupafu… please…
I’m an idiot.
It’s impossible.
There’s no way for Vesta to know such a thing.

“T-This.”
“I heard from a senior of mine that I can make my master happy with this technique.”

A young girl who knows such an adult technique.
What have you taught her, Vesta’s senior.
What a great technique you have taught her, Vesta’s senior.
Superb.
Excellent.
There is nothing that can possibly ruin this moment.
Absolutely nothing.

To be able to live this glorious moment, I, Michio Kaga, 17 years old, have received a tremendous favor. I sincerely thank you.
Pafupafu will live on forever.

Chapter 126 - Cold Body

Engulfed in a sweet euphoria, I wake up filled with ecstasy.
Roxanne's soft skin feels so pleasant.
Smooth, elastic, I can feel such a weight on my arm.
I almost subconsciously bent over to please myself.

N-Not good.
Which reminds me, I left Sex Maniac on.
Well, with Roxanne sleeping in my arms, I would assault her even if didn't have Sex Maniac on.

Roxanne notices that I have woken up, and gives me a kiss.
It makes me think that she is seducing me to do her again.
Even though she's doing it per my instructions.
I can feel her soft lips on mine, and her moist breath on my face.

C-Calm down.
Calm down.
It's okay.
It won't be long before the night falls again.

I used Sex Maniac last night.
Like I thought, with four people around, it is a little difficult without using Sex Maniac.
However, when I use Sex Maniac, even the four of them are not enough.
It is a vexing problem.

But then, it's important to show them that there's still room for more.
In the future.
It's important to show them that we need more party members.
So, even if I'm left unsatisfied now, it'll pay off later.

Roxanne's tongue can make up for the unsatisfied feeling.
I push my tongue in Roxanne's mouth, and stick it to her tongue.

I move my tongue around and taste her mouth.
I didn't let go of her mouth until I was fully satisfied.

"Good morning, Master."
"Good Morning."

I release Roxanne. Next is Sherry.
There's more to come.
I fully enjoy the lovely mouth of petite Sherry, until our lips separate.

Thereafter, I receive a kiss from Miria, who had changed places with Roxanne.
It's still dark inside the room, but Miria can move freely regardless.
I enjoy Miria's wildly moving tongue to my heart's content.
After fully enjoying her mouth, I let my lips part from hers.

"Good Morning, desu."
"Good Morning."

I waited for some time after Miria's turn was over, but Vesta's kiss did not come.
Huh? Where is she?
The size of the bed, since two are adjoined, is big enough.
There is enough room for Vesta to join in.

When Vesta entered the bathtub, it became cramped as I had expected.
It felt like we were potatoes in a bag.
To be sandwiched between Roxanne and Vesta in the bathtub.
It was godly.

I move my arm around the bed, searching for Vesta.
Is she still sleeping?
She is…
Here.

"She is cold."

I pull my hand back the moment I touch her body.
Vesta's body, who was sleeping naked, was cold.
It was very cold.

Eh?
Is she alive?
Don't tell me…
Is she dead?

"As expected. Because she is a dragonkin, her body is cold in the morning."
"Really?"
"Yes."

Sherry explains.

"…Good morning, Master."
"Good Morning."
"I am sorry. I feel a little weak in the morning."

Vesta seems to have woken up.
She is alive, thankfully.

"Your body is cold. Are you alright?"
"Yes. When the temperature during the day is high, I lose warmth, and my body becomes cold during the night. My body regains its warmth after I wake up, so it's fine. Conversely, if it's cold during day, my body becomes hot, so I don't freeze while sleeping. However, I wake up tired and exhausted in the morning. We, dragonkin, are weak from late night till early morning."

Dragonkin, for one reason or another, always seem to be troubled.
Now I get that they don't have such a cool chuuni name without any cost.
Vesta raises her body, and touches me.
Chilly Vesta is pleasant, too.

"Are you fine with moving? Don't push yourself too hard."
"Yes. But I may be slightly cold."
"I don't mind. Rather, I am actually happy."

The temperature is high because it's summer.
Vesta's cold skin feels good.
I can rub her skin to warm her up.

Doesn't that make Vesta, who becomes cold at night, the best body pillow you can dream of?
If it became any hotter in the summer than it already is, it would be uncomfortable to sleep together like this, I'm afraid.
With Vesta, however, there is nothing to fear.

What's more, she can conversely be used to keep the body warm when the temperature drops.
Ice pillow in the summer. Hot water pack in the winter.
I may not be able to part from her anymore.

Vesta puts her lips on mine.
She sucks my mouth, and pushes her tongue in.
Her cold, refreshing tongue moves around.
Her tongue reaches every hot corner inside my mouth, and intertwines with my tongue.

She is the most aggressive one amongst the four of them.
It looks like Vesta's senior taught her how to do that.
I really want to thank this senior of hers.

While locking lips with her, I try put my hands around Vesta's back.
She is too big, to the point that I can't pull her into my embrace.
Even so, she is great.

I somehow manage to hug Vesta's cold body.
Because her body is too big, she didn't wear nightgown.
I am sandwiched between her enormous breasts.
Vesta moves away after finishing with her tongue and breasts assault.

"I wonder if it felt good. I was told that you would love it if I did it like this."
"It was amazing."
"Master's warm body was great, too. It might not have felt as good since I am still not used to doing it, but I will try my best from now on."

You are going to try more than that?
I look forward to it in the future.
After Vesta left, Miria came and helped her put a shirt on.
With the help of Miria, she put on her equipment.

“Are you done changing, Vesta?”
“Yes, I am done.”
“It’s time to go, then. Vesta is coming with us, too.”
“Yes.”

From the bedroom, I warp to Haruba’s 18th floor.
This time, in addition to the other three, who are used to it already, is Vesta.

“It is still early in the morning. Vesta, are you fine with moving around?”
“I am okay now, I believe.”

Inside the small room, I hand her a hat, a shield and also a magic crystal.
I hand Vesta the wooden shield and a spare black magic crystal I had.
I am sorry for Vesta’s equipment being only spares for the time being.

“Also, use this steel sword for now.”
“M-Master will not have a sword, then? Are you sure?”
“I will be using a different one.”
“O-Okay.”

I take the steel sword off my waist and pass it to Vesta.
Vesta is using both her hands. She’s holding the two-handed steel sword with her right hand and the wooden shield with her left.
It indeed seems that the big Vesta can one-handedly swing the two-handed sword easily, without any problem.

“Oh right, Sherry, can you make a large shield?”
“The dragonkin tribe uses large shield. The present me cannot make it. Also, higher-tier material is required for plate, either steel or Damascus steel.”

Like I thought, the current Sherry can’t make it.
If it uses steel, then it will be either equal to or greater than the steel shield that Roxanne is currently using.
Is there a way to obtain it?

“There are fewer monsters on the right than on the left. Where would you like to go?”
“The left will be fine. It should be safe enough for Vesta.”

Under Roxanne's guidance, we advance through the labyrinth.
Roxanne is the vanguard, followed by Miria and Vesta.
Sherry is the rearguard, behind me.

"Umm, can Roxanne-san track the monsters by their smell?"
"Yes, I have to be of use to Master."
"Amazing."

While Roxanne and Vesta were having a conversation, we reach a group of monsters.
Three Fly Traps, one Kettle Mermaid and one Clamshell.
In order to take out Fly Traps first, I need to use fire magic.
I cast [Fire Storm].

"Sherry, Miria, come to the front. Vesta fall back a bit, please."

Roxanne commands the three of them into the battle formation.
Roxanne takes the central position, Sherry goes to her left, Miria covers the right side.
While sparks were dancing in front of us, Vesta takes a step back, and comes next to me.

"They may shoot water magic, so don't lose focus."
"Okay."

It is especially dangerous standing behind Roxanne.
Vesta and I line up separated by two columns.
I wait for the flames to go out, then cast the second [Fire Storm].
I follow it with the third one.

"Here it comes."

Right after Roxanne's warning, a water shot comes flying between Vesta and me.
I am glad I was not directly behind her.
The monsters in the front close in and attack her.
Two Fly Traps and one Kettle Mermaid.

Roxanne dodges the Fly trap's attack easily.
While dodging, she hits it with her Estoc.
The Fly Trap, that spat water earlier, comes to the front.

The Clamshell seems to be falling back.
It's probably planning to spit water from behind.
Sure enough, while it was being attacked, it spits water.
Roxanne dodges by a hair's breadth.

While dodging the second Fly Trap's attack, is it even possible to dodge an attack coming from behind it at the same time?
She's terrifying as always.
I cast one more fire spell, and burn the Fly Traps to nothing.

Miria and Roxanne take on the remaining Clamshell and Kettle mermaid.
Sherry takes a step back, and uses her spear's [Incantation Interruption] skill to interrupt their skill attacks.
Without taking a rest, I cast [Sand Storm] to tidy the remaining two up.
Without getting exposed to the enemy attacks too much, we finish the monsters off.

"Amazing. Everyone is Amazing."

Vesta is in awe.
"Well, it's not always like this."
"Monsters can be taken out quickly using magic attacks. However, the monsters we fought were weak. It takes more time to defeat stronger ones."
"I guess."

Which reminds me, Vesta told me that she fought monsters in the vicinity of the labyrinth. She never entered one before.

"Roxanne-san was especially amazing. Absolutely wonderful. She will be my role model."

Vesta goes to Roxanne while picking up dropped items.
Using her as a role model won't help you.

"Thank you very much."
"I wonder how you can move like that."

“You will be good if you watch the monster’s movement closely. Then you move your waist like this to dodge.”

Roxanne shows her the movement.

“So you use your waist?”
“Right, desu. ‘Ba’, desu. Monsters sometimes move like ‘shu’, ‘shu’, ‘ba’, ‘ba’.”
“I-I will try my best.”

Vesta nods with doubtful expression.
Looks like Vesta has common sense.
Well, try your utmost to dance.

We will continue Vesta’s field trip until she becomes Villager Lv5.
If she becomes Lv5 during the morning, it will be great.
It took some time for me to become Villager Lv5.
The conditions, however, are not the same. The experience gained from 18th floor monsters is better.

Villager Lv5, Farmer Lv1, Explorer Lv1, Herbalist Lv1.

Oh well, it turns out that Vesta doesn’t have many jobs.
Both Explorer and Herbalist were obtained today.
Warrior and Swordsman did not appear. It shows she hasn’t trained that much.
It is admirable that she doesn’t have Thief.

“So this is basically how we fight inside the labyrinth.”
“Yes, all of you are amazing.”
“I am planning on having Vesta fight soon.”
“Y-Yes, I think I will be fine.”

She looks a little tense, but there is enthusiasm.
I move to Haruba’s 1st floor using [Dungeon Walk].
But the situation here is exactly what I feared.
The monsters here collapsed with the first spell.

“We went there the other day. Is it fine to start from the 10th floor?”
“The 10th floor will be a little tough, though. I don’t think the monsters there will be done in with one blow.”

I confirm with Sherry.
When I obtained the Assassin job the other day, one spell was enough to almost beat the monsters on 10th floor.
Then, should I avoid the 10th floor, after all?

If I am not mistaken, we went to the 8th floor when Miria joined. But Miria had the Diver job's assistance against aquatic monsters.
That said, Vesta has leveled up to Villager Lv5, and there is the 'Increase in Endurance' effect of Miria's Diver Lv33 job this time.
And she has the advantage of 5 party members against 4 in case of Miria.

But I feel uneasy going to 10th floor directly.
We should try one floor at a time. We can start from 2nd floor and advance to 9th floor in Haruba's labyrinth.
It is a little troublesome to jump to Quratar.

"I will think about the 10th floor if it doesn't work."

I switch my weapons from the Rod of Offerings to the iron sword.
Cheep Sheep appears, and falls in two spells.
Is the [2x Increase in Intelligence] effect that big?
I should allocate bonus points toward Intelligence so much so that I can nearly kill the monsters in one spell.

"Next one is here."
"Alright. Then, Vesta, can you try to finish off the monster with your sword if it is not killed in one spell?"

I instruct Vesta, and cast a spell.
The monster collapses in one spell. Wonderful.
The next one survives the attack.

Vesta raises her steel sword and runs.
As expected, her big body is really strong.
She doesn't seem to fear the monsters. She has great war potential.
A two-meter-long soldier, who cuts monsters with their sword, is scary.

Vesta swings the sword down from above.
The Cheep Sheep charges at Vesta, but Vesta easily takes on the blow using her shield.

The monster's charge was quite strong, but she received it easily with one hand and neutralized it.

Next, It cuts in from the side. She catches the second charge with the shield.
Once she stops the monster in place, she stabs it with her sword.
Cheep Sheep drops down.

"I-I did it."

I open the Party Job Settings interface.
Villager Lv5, Farmer Lv1, Explorer Lv1, Herbalist Lv1, Warrior Lv1, Swordsman Lv1.
The conditions for Warrior and Swordsman were fulfilled at the same time.

Chapter 127 - Dragon Knight

“Excellent. What an interesting fighting style.”
“Thank you very much.”

The way Vesta fought was that of an expert fighter.
Perhaps, It was her huge body that drove her like that.
What made it terrifying was how she used the two-handed sword to kill it with just one hand.

Well, according to her, she has fought a monster outside the labyrinth before.
A lot of things in a world where monsters exist is supposed to be different, I guess.
She is different from the weak Japanese.

“On the next surviving monster, use this spear to kill it.”
“Spear?”
“I am going to have you try using a variety of weapons.”
“Okay.”

I pass the spear to Vesta.
Or more like, I forced it on her.

Both Roxanne and I automatically obtained Knight when we got to Warrior Lv30.
To get the Knight job, I think it may be necessary to defeat monsters using spear.
Apparently, the warriors aspiring to be knights train with spears.

Vesta, along with the steel sword, hands over the wooden shield.
It seems she will be using both her hands for the spear.
As expected, is it hard to wield it with just one hand?

The Cheep Sheep that survived my spell, Vesta challenges it.
Big Vesta spins the Sacred Spear.

Amazing.
She is actually spinning it above her head.

She is like a hero from the three kingdoms era.
If someone like Guan Yu were to appear, I would cry out loud, indeed.

Vesta rushes at the monster, and swings the Sacred Spear down.
Cheep Sheep gets smashed down.
Another single blow!?
It is most likely a coincidence.

However, there was no new job, even though she finished it off with spear.
No Knight, as expected, but not even Dragon Knight?

“Great. Next time, try fighting bare-handed.”
“Bare-handed?”
“It will be a little difficult, though.”
“I think I will be fine.”

After receiving the dropped item and the Sacred Spear, I see Vesta off to the next battle.
Vesta fights a Cheep sheep bare-handed.
Vesta strikes. Cheap sheep returns the favor with a body slam.
Hoping for no damage was too much, I guess.

[Plating] and [Heal], I cast both on her again.
I don’t know how much recovery she requires, but for now, I cast it only once.
Vesta dodges the next body slam, and slams her fist into the sheep’s flank.
The monster charges at her again, but Vesta manages to dodge it again.

Looking at Vesta and the Cheep Sheep, they look like a girl playing with her dog.
Vesta hits the sheep on its head.
Oops, that can no longer be called playing.
It would have been ‘pet abuse’ had that been a dog.

The monster stands back up, and attacks Vesta again.
Vesta receives its attack and counters it with a punch.
Cheep Sheep stumbles, and collapses.

As expected, it was really hard fighting bare-handed.
It might have been comfortable watching from the sideline, but for Vesta, who was fighting, it was a furious fight.

“Well done. For now, you better get some rest. Call me when you think you are ready.”
“No need. It only scratched me a little. I think I am alright.”

Eh? Was it just my imagination?
I thought Cheep sheep assaulted her without holding back.

“If you say you’re fine then you must be, I guess.”
“That aside, you can even use recovery magic! That is amazing.”

It was because I got the Monk job when I fought bare-handed before. Right now, even you have it.
I cast Plating on her again.

With this, the fighting bare-handed experiment is over.
Now, the only weapon left is hammer. But so far, hammer was relevant only to Master Smith?
Even I didn’t get any related job from using it.
Since Master Smith is a racial job of dwarves, Vesta won’t be able to get it.

“Do you know what is required to become a dragon knight?”
“Dragon Knight? Only the brave dragonkin can obtain that job. It is believed that you can become one when you fight monsters all alone.”
“I don’t know much details of it since it is racial job, even though I was reading a job-related book in the library yesterday.”

Vesta and Sherry answer.
Was Sherry gathering information relating to the jobs for us?
Good girl.

“There is no helping it since it is a racial job.”
“I am sorry.”
“Was there anything interesting there?”
“Yes, there was a job I have never heard about before. If I am not mistaken, it is called Gambler.”

Is there such a job?
I have not seen it so far.
I wonder how can I become one.
Is gambling even common here?

Maybe, something like stabbing a monster with a toothpick in my mouth until it dies?
If I do that, will I be able to become a dragon knight?
Since it is a dragonkin tribe's racial job, I can't become one.
I got absorbed just thinking about it.

Or maybe, I need to visit Konpira shrine?
I will probably die.
Like they say.
An Idiot can not be cured unless they die.

"Gambler, huh?"
"You know about it? It is my first time hearing this word, Gambler."
"Is that so? You know anything in this regard, Vesta?"
"I don't know."

Even Vesta doesn't know?
Since it is being translated as Gambler, it doesn't seem to be an unknown word.

"Is it something like a hidden job for the people from the back alley?"
"I see. It was indeed written that it's similar to Thief. Perhaps, it is a job related, somehow, to thieves."
"Are you sure it was not just random scribbles?"

Can you really trust something written as 'similar to Thief'?
Maybe it was just something written by someone on their dying bed?

"I don't know. 'I discovered an astonishing way to obtain this job, but there is not enough space to write it.' was written inside."

Is it Fermat's theorem? (TN: Fermat was a french mathematician)
Write it down properly next time!
It is a really serious matter.

“It is alright, perhaps.”
“But there is one thing I still didn’t get. Strangely, it was written that it is also related to Bounty Hunter, too. It could really be just a prank.”
“Oh. No, maybe it is not, after all.”

When she said ‘Bounty Hunter’, I got it.
The Bounty Hunter skill, [Dead or Alive]. (TN: The skill name has been changed from Ignore Life and Death / Transcending Life and Death to Dead or Alive)
If you look at the name carefully, and the fact that you need to select a target to invoke it, Wouldn’t that make [Dead or Alive] a single death blow skill?
But I have yet to succeed.

Maybe, it is a kind of skill that has a certain rate of success?
It’s a gamble whether you can kill the target or not.
If it is gamble, then it is part of gambling world.
Maybe, the condition to acquire Gambler is successfully activating Dead or Alive skill? That is what I think.

“Oh, did you realize something from that?”
“No, I am not sure yet. But it was a good hint, nevertheless. Thank you.”
“It wasn’t much.”

I haven’t been successful with Dead or Alive skill thus far.
I think it is highly possible that the success rate is related to the level.
If any idiot could kill any monster without any limitation or restriction, Dead or Alive would be a broken skill.

Gambler seems to be a difficult-to-get job.
You need to level Warrior up to Lv30 first to get Bounty Hunter.
After that, you need to level up Bounty Hunter to increase the success rate of Dead or Alive skill.
It is also possible that I need to level up Thief as well.

Leveling up Thief in addition to Warrior and Bounty Hunter.
I doubt it will be generally known.

However, there is a compatibility between Thief and Bounty Hunter.
If a thief quits, they can work as a bounty hunter.

A bounty hunter can cross the line and fall to a thief's level.
Both are likely to happen.

There seems to be a person who managed to fulfill the condition and became a Gambler.
Since he was not able to publicly announce that he was a thief, I can understand that he could only write it in a book in the corner of the library.
For now, I can try to aim for it and see how it goes.
Because the job is difficult to obtain, I'm not sure yet whether I'll be successful or not.

For the time being, Dragon Knight is the priority.
Since you need to fight alone, will killing a monster by yourself meet the requirement to acquire the Dragon Knight job?
I bring out Durandal.

"Vesta, can you try fighting a monster by yourself using this sword?"
"Okay."

If she were to use Durandal, even if the first blow didn't work. the second one would surely kill it.
She will be able safely fight alone.

"Umm… This is the sword Master always uses, right?"
"Yes, it is."
"Even though you have never let me use it."

Roxanne complains in a low voice.
This is troublesome.

"Well… because it is a two-handed sword."
"It is not like I can't use a two-handed sword, at all."
"T-Then, do you want to try it, Roxanne?"
"Are you fine with it?"

I am the one who needs to ask if you're fine with it.
However, Roxanne's eyes were sparkling when I looked at her.
I can't help it.

“We can try it in order, I guess.”
“Yes.”

Roxanne takes Durandal exultantly.
She holds it like it is something very important.
She looks pleased. That’s good, I guess.

Roxanne slowly pulls the sword out.
And advances just like that.

“Good. With this sword, go and kill it.”

Cheep Sheep targets Roxanne.
Roxanne rushes to the monster, and swings Durandal down.
The sheep dies with the first blow.

“Amazing. Even I managed to kill the monster in a single blow. To have such an amazing weapon as this one, as expected of Master.”

Roxanne hands over the dropped item and Durandal.
Rather, it should be I to say ‘as expected of Roxanne’.
Being a Knight Lv20.

“Next, would Sherry like to try it?”
“Sure.”
“Here you go.”

I hand Sherry Durandal. Roxanne guides us to the next monster.
Would everyone like to try it, after all?
I don’t think there is a chance to obtain anything expect for Dragon Knight.
‘It is a waste of time’ — is what I want to say.
Since even I don’t have any related job, so it most likely is useless, really.

Sherry cuts the monster in half.
Her level is higher than Roxanne’s, who switched her job midway. Also, because Master Smith has a job effect ‘Increase in Strength’, her physical attack power will be high, of course.
It is natural for it to be done in with the first strike.

“What an incredible sword. Anyways, with this sword, will we get any new job?”
“Nope. You will not get anything.”
“Is that so? You hold truly an amazing sword, nonetheless.”

As you would expect from Sherry.
She understands why I am having them partake in such activities.

“Does Miria want to try, too?”
“Yes, desu.”

As expected, Miria also kills it in single blow.

“How was it?”
“Amazing, desu.”

Miria’s ears stand erect. She returns Durandal while staring at it with great interest.
This has turned into a sword exhibition.
With this, I have exposed in broad daylight that my ability to kill monsters was all thanks to Durandal.
No, not yet. It is not an established fact yet.

“Vesta, try it now.”
“Understood.”

Even with Villager Lv5, Vesta defeated the monster in one blow.
With this, there is no longer any room for doubt.
It was all thanks to Durandal.

Even though it has been established as fact, Vesta acquires the Dragon Knight Job.
Rather than killing a monster final attack, the condition is to kill a monster all by yourself from the start.
The reason being, it will be difficult even for a dragonkin to kill a monster in one hit.

Dragon Knight Lv1.
Effects | Medium Increase in Endurance | Small Increase in Endurance | Minute Increase in Endurance

Skills | Dual Wielding | Critical Outbreak | Damage Reduction
There is some terrifying deviation in job effects.
What is… that?
As you would expect from a job with such a chuuni name.

And these skills, they are even more amazing.
That there is a skill called Dual Wielding, is it perhaps impossible for normal people to wield two swords?
And with this Critical Outbreak skill?

There is an Increase in Critical Hit Rate skill in my bonus incantations.
I didn't feel any Critical or Outbreak while using Increase in Critical Hit Rate.
Perhaps, without having Critical Outbreak, it is impossible to use Increase in Critical Hit Rate?

Is Increase in Critical Hit Rate skill useless except for dragonkin?
Nope. There may be another job with Critical Outbreak skill. That's what I want to believe!

"What kind of skill is Damage Reduction?"

I can understand, though, what it means to some degree.

"You are asking me? I have never heard it before."
"Sherry?"
"I have heard about Physical Damage Reduction and Magic Damage Reduction skills, but as for Damage Reduction skill, I have never heard about it before."

It seems neither Sherry nor Vesta know about it.
Is it perhaps a passive skill?
Rather than the type that needs to be invoked, is it possible that it always reduces the damage received?
As you would expect from a job with such a cool chuuni name.

"When you say Damage Reduction, doesn't something strange happen?"
"Damage Reduction? No, nothing strange."

I have set Dragon Knight Lv1 as Vesta's job, but nothing seems to be happening.
So it is a passive skill, after all.
It would be strange for nothing to happen if it were an active skill.

"Dragon Knight, what kind of job is it?"
"A job held by only the righteous amongst the dragonkin tribe. It's a job they wield to protect their lord and friends."

I see. Does it mean that a dragon knight is basically a knight?

"Dragon Knight is a job that excels in defense. It is believed that the stability and safety of a party increases if they have a dragon knight."

Sherry further explains.
No wonder. With that much Increase in Endurance, it will surely excel in defense.
So the three of them will form the line of defense.
Dragon Knight is a job that specializes in defense, huh?
The job effects are shared by the whole party.
Being a dragon knight, she can take a hit, surely.
But I am still not sure if Damage Reduction will work for the whole party or just her.

Since our party's main attack force is my magic, it may be better to have a job specialized in defense.
I will leave Vesta's job as Dragon Knight.

Chapter 128 - Damage Reduction

“Becoming a dragon knight is a dream of every dragonkin. I, too, would like to become a dragon knight to support Master and the party.”
“Well, Vesta is already a dragon knight.”

I try my best to say it casually.

“Do you want to go on as dragon knight?”
“Umm, but in order to become a dragon knight, you need years of training, and you must get recognized by the guild temple. As for me, I didn’t even fight that much.”
“It’s okay. Stretch your left hand out.”

Vesta shows me her left hand.
However, since my fifth job is Alchemy, and I am currently using Plating; I switch my fourth job, Monk, with Knight.
I invoke Intelligence Card Operation.
Intelligence Card comes out of Vesta’s left hand.

“Check it.”

Seeing is believing.
Vesta has checked my Intelligence Card before, so she should be able to read Brahim language.
Vesta looks at her own Intelligence Card.

“It is true… I have become a dragon knight!”
“Do you believe me now?”
“Umm, Dragon Knight… Err, Intelligence Card… Eh? My Master’s job was able to operate the Intelligence Cards?…”
“It is alright, Vesta. Because he’s Master.”

Roxanne tries to calm Vesta down.
Since we are in the labyrinth, we will be in trouble if she behaved like this.

“Because Vesta is a genius, she managed to acquire Dragon Knight, I think.”
She may be confused for now, but she will get used to it eventually.
“Eh? No way!”
“Anyways, let us move to 10th floor.”
“We are going to try poison now?”
“Yeah.”

We move to 10th floor.
Apparently, Roxanne knows well as to why we are going to the 10th floor.

“We need NT Ant, then. This way.”

Under Roxanne’s guidance, we hunt NT Ants, and collect poison stingers.
Vesta devoted herself to learning by observation.
After collecting ten stingers, we return to 18th floor.

“Since I am a Dragon Knight now, somehow; I can fight, too.”
“Good girl. You will get to fight soon, but for now, wait.”
“Understood.”

Vesta is a Dragon Knight Lv1.
It is not good to send her to battle this early.
That said, I can’t have her keep observing forever.
It is so difficult to make a decision.

Before finishing the early morning hunt, Vesta reaches Dragon Knight Lv5.
When the level is low, the leveling speed is faster.
Is this much good enough?
Before having breakfast, I move to Quratar’s 7th floor.

By the way, while preparing breakfast, Vesta asked Sherry, “What kind of Job does Master have?” I heard it clearly, even though she whispered it to her.
Sherry seemed troubled on how to reply.
She seems to have neither confirmed it nor denied.

“From now on, while observing, Vesta will be fighting as well. Don’t push yourself too hard, though. If you find yourself in trouble, just say so.”
“Okay.”
“I am sure it will be scary at first, but try to receive an attack from a monster on purpose. Since we fight in the labyrinth, it is impossible to avoid

getting damaged. Depending on the damage you receive from the monsters, I am planning on moving to higher floors."
"Yes. I believe I'll be fine."

Since the Dragon Knight job has Damage Reduction Skill, it will be safe to start from the 7th floor.
Cheep Sheep's attack from Haruba's 1st floor did not seem to inflict any damage.
Haruba's 10th floor would do, I'm fairly sure. However, because NT Ants possess poison, it will be a hurdle for the first timers.
Quratar's 7th floor's Slow Rabbit seems more appropriate.

"Let's go, then."
"Umm, is it okay to keep using this weapon?"

Ah, that's right.
Since she has become a dragon knight, she can dual wield now.
If she were to hold two Durandals, she would be a force beyond logic.
But it is impossible since I can't produce two of them.

Sherry may have some suggestion regarding this matter, but when I look at her, she says nothing. There doesn't seem to be any case where a master lets their slave equip stronger weapon than theirs.
If I select Durandal, there is no alluring experience buff.

"We will continue like this for a while. I will reconsider it depending on the circumstances."
"I understand."

Is it thanks to Dual Wielding skill that a dragon knight can equip a two-handed sword and a large shield?
I was of the idea that the large shield would not be required any time soon, but it may unexpectedly be needed sooner.
I will wait and see. If there's no need for the shield, then she can go with two swords.
I will search for a large shield if I feel there is a need for one.

"Is it possible to equip two large shields?"
"Yes. A few dragonkin do that. But not many since attack power will decrease consequently."

So equipping two large shields is possible, huh?
It would be super defensive style.
It's better for situations where you receive too much damage and there's no time/opportunity for recovery.

"Roxanne, can you please guide us to place with fewer Slow Rabbits?"
"Yes."

We advance under Roxanne's guidance.
A Monster comes out. A splendid, lone Slow Rabbit.
I cast a [Fireball] and wait.
Vesta goes to the front.

The Slow Rabbit approaches, and hurls its body at Vesta.
Vesta lays her shield down, and receives the attack to her stomach from the side.
After confirming that she received the attack, I finish the monster off with another [Fireball].

"How do you feel?"
"Err… Yes, I think I am alright."

Vesta shakes her head in puzzlement.

"Did it hurt?"
"Nope. I am shocked because It didn't hurt. It did about same damage as the Cheep Sheep I fought earlier. I am sorry, I think I blocked some of the damage with the shield, somehow."
"I didn't see it hitting the shield, at all."
"Yes, it did not touch the shield, at all."

Roxanne confirms that it wasn't blocked with the shield.
If Roxanne says that, then it is definitely true.
Even though we advanced from 1st floor to 7th floor, her job changed from Villager to Dragon Knight, and she has Damage Reduction skill, too.
I guess such a thing is not impossible.

"In any case, It is good that the damage was small."
"Yes."

Because she had Plating, I expected the damage to be minimal to begin with.

“Should I assume there is no problem with 7th floor? or do you want to try once more?”
“I think there is no problem.”

Since I have received Vesta’s confirmation, I move to Haruba’s labyrinth.

“Although I said that, your next task is simply to throw these stingers.”

I hand Vesta the stingers.
I have her use poison on Haruba’s 1st floor.
To have only one monster come out on 1st floor is a problem, but there is nothing that can be done about it.

In order to finish it off with poison, I will need to beat it up until it is about to die, but there is a chance it may not work.
Considering it has 50% chance of success; on 10th floor, with three or four monsters coming out, at least one of them would survive if I used magic.
So 10th floor is actually more convenient, but I can’t say it is easy.
Also, on 10th floor, if we meet NT Ant, it will be a game of tag.

“Are these stingers?”
“Use it on the monster that survives my magic attack. Roxanne, please?”
“Yes.”

Against Cheep Sheep on Haruba’s 1st floor, I used a magic attack that should be able to barely kill it.
The monster managed to endure the magic attack, so I wait.
Roxanne keeps it distracted at the front. Vesta throws a stinger from the side.

“Poison, desu.”

Miria tries to inform.
Even I know this time around.
The color of the monster changes when it gets poison. However, with the NT Ant being black and the labyrinth being dark, it is difficult to confirm whether the poison has been inflicted or not. But I can if it is a white sheep.
Its color seems to have turned pale.

Is that how it looks when poisoned?
It looks more like sick than poisoned.
Is it not inflicting poison because it received posion?

The Cheep Sheep immediately drops down.
The trials to obtain jobs end with this.
Thereafter, while checking our status, I move up the floors one by one.

“Next is the 11th floor. Try receiving an attack from a Mino. Don’t force yourself, though. If it is bad, say so.”
“I think I will be fine.”

We move to the 11th floor.
Because I want to avoid the NT Ant’s poison attack on 10th floor.
Escape Goats from the 10th floor will be fine. However, since there was no issue with the 7th floor, the 11th floor would probably be possible, too.

Roxanne guides us to a place with only one Mino.
Vesta receives the monster’s attack.
I demolish the Mino with the second spell right after.

“How was it?”
“Yes, I am completely fine. This time, I received the attack for sure. I fought Mino outside the labyrinth before, but the attack this time didn’t feel any different.”

I had her try it without Plating this time, but there doesn’t seem to be any problem.

“Well, I think there is a difference between the Mino you fought outside and the one inside the labyrinth, but are you really fine?”

Sherry butts in.
There is indeed a difference between the attack of a Lv1 monster outside and a Lv11 monster inside.
Her level has increased, and there is the effect of Damage Reduction, too. I shouldn’t have been worried.

“In any case, it is alright.”
“Both of them didn’t hurt that much, so there really is no difference.”

It didn't hurt that much?
I can easily afford to move further up the floors.

"She didn't get hurt, at all?"
"Hmm… as for me, the attacks I received from the monsters inside the labyrinth were quite stronger than the attacks from the monsters outside."

Sherry looks at Roxanne as if calling for help, but Roxanne shakes her head in puzzlement.
She chose the wrong one to ask for help.
In Roxanne's case, it is more surprising that she even received a monster's attack outside the labyrinth.

"Then, let's try Pig Hog from the 13th floor next."

Because 12th floor's Grass Bee has poison attack, I will pass.
We tried the attack of the 13th floor's Pig Hog instead.

"Err…. like the Mino from before, there is hardly any damage. I can still afford more."

This time, I casted Plating, so that must be the reason for there being no difference.
I ignore Sherry who's muttering 'even though it was a Pig Hog'.
Although the monsters appearing on 12th floor or above are a lot stronger than those appearing on 11th or lower floors, the difference was offset by Plating.
Plating can be used to reduce damage. I have already tested it by casting it on a monster.

"How about Sarracenia from 14th floor next? or do you think Clamshell from 16th floor would be better?"
"I think 16th floor would be better."

She does seem to have more in reserve.
I move to the 16th floor.
Because the 15th floor's Bitch Butterfly has paralysis attack, I decide to avoid it.

“Roxanne, do you know the location of the boss room on the 16th floor?”
“Yes. If I am not mistaken, it’s this way.”
“Then, let’s head to the boss room. If there is a Clamshell nearby, please guide us to it.”

I ask of Roxanne to guide us.
There is no identifiable difference inside the cave for me to be able to memorize the way.
She can find it using the smell, perhaps.

“Along the way, there is a group of Clamshell and Bitch Butterfly. There are several Clamshells.”
“It is dangerous since there is a large number.”
“There is just Clamshell in the opposite direction. Possibly more than one. If we take a right, there is a group of Clamshell and Bitch Butterfly. There is only one Clamshell, perhaps.”
“That way should be fine, then.”

One monster would be better to receive an attack on purpose.
However, although I intend to receive just one attack, if I receive successive attacks, we will be in a pinch.
It is troublesome to kill them one by one by using single target magic attacks.
It is also not a good idea to let the battle drag on for it is the 16th floor.

We advance under Roxanne’s guidance. We come across a group of one Clamshell and two Bitch Butterflies.
I cast [Breeze Storm].
If I attack Bitch Butterflies, whose weakness is wind magic, with wind magic, only the lone Clamshell will remain.
As expected, Roxanne knows what’s going through my mind.

“Can’t I just go forward ahead of time?”
“No, wait until I take out the Bitch Butterflies.”
“Understood.”

I hold Vesta back, and cast more wind spells.
It is great that she’s motivated, I think.
Roxanne, Sherry, Miria; confront the monster.

When the butterflies collapse, everyone surrounds the remaining Clamshell.
I switch to [Sand Ball] and attack it.

Vesta exchanges places with Roxanne, and challenges it head on.
Vesta provokes the monster by hitting its shell with her steel sword.
The shell of the Clamshell moves slightly.
It is not coming out of its shell.

“Be prepared to receive either Water or Bite.”

I wish there was a way for me to know beforehand.
When the Clamshell opens its shell, it either spits water or bites.
Both are more troublesome than normal body blow. It’s probably not a good idea to receive it on purpose.

“Here comes the bite.”

Can Roxanne really see through it?
I can’t tell the two apart from its initial movement.
The Clamshell opens its shell wide. Just as Roxanne said, it tries to bite.
It jumps to attack Vesta.

Vesta repels it with her shield.
Woah.
She literally sent it flying.

The flying shell approaches her to attack again. It is trying to return the favour by slamming her with a body blow.
Vesta puts the shield down and receives the attack on purpose.
I attack it with another [Sand Ball] and finish it off.
Next, I apply Plating on Vesta again, and cast Heal.

“Even though we moved up two floors, it was alright. Ah, this much recovery is sufficient.”

I stop casting Heal on Vesta.
Just once was good enough?

“Don’t you need more?”

The effect of Damage Reduction skill is considerably huge, surely.
As it is going, even the 18th floor won't be a problem.

Chapter 129 - Oyster

We resume heading to the boss room.
On the way, we encounter three Clamshells and one Bitch Butterfly.
It is the one Roxanne mentioned first.
I ambush them with [Sand Storm], while Roxanne heads out to take the vanguard's position.

"Wouldn't it be better if I head to the front?"
"Ah, I guess. Sherry, change places with Vesta."
"Okay."
"I will do my best."

Sherry and Vesta swap positions.
It would have been better if she just observed up till 18th floor, but since she herself proposed it, I guess it would be alright.
Being motivated really is great.
Since Sherry uses spear, she can attack even from the back.

"Since you are going to the front, take this."
"Okay. Thank you very much."

Sherry covers Vesta's head with Strengthened Hard Leather Hat, which she was wearing.
Vesta lowers her head and receives it.
It is indeed better for them to exchange it if they are to swap positions.

Starting from the left; Vesta, Roxanne, and Miria line up in front.
We wait for the monsters to arrive.
You can imagine how powerful my vanguards are.
The big Vesta in front is quite reliable.

At some point in the future, I will try placing Vesta in the centre.
Presently, Roxanne evades monsters' attacks and stays half-a-step forward to draw monsters' attention. It is not certain whether they recognize her as

the main vanguard or not.
It's logical perspective.

"Here it comes."

Roxanne's voice resounds.
I wonder if it's water attack from the Clamshell.
That guy, huh?
The Clamshell opens its shell.

Good timing.
Now who is it aiming at?
The shell spits water.
Roxanne tilts the upper half of her body a little to her right, and dodges the water.

This time, there were many for it to aim at, but it aims at the main vanguard, Roxanne.
The monsters seem to be able to properly determine which one is the main vanguard.

Sherry in the back evades the water that Roxanne dodged.
Sherry thrusts her spear through the space between Roxanne and Vesta.
There's no problem for me since I can use magic from anywhere, so there is no reason for me to move away from behind Roxanne.
It's an unexpected problem to this formation.

"Are you alright?"
"I managed to dodge it, somehow, so there's no problem."

Well, 'do your best, Sherry' is the best I can say to Sherry.
Two Clamshells and one Bitch Butterfly close in on the vanguards.
The Clamshell in the back, who spat water, turns around.
The vanguards block the monsters. Sherry thrusts the spear. I cast spells.

[Sand Storm] finishes off the Clamshells.
I managed to kill them before it could fire a second shot.
Vesta is able to play a vanguard role safely, too.
We seem to be able to fight properly, don't we?

I sweep the remaining Bitch Butterfly right after.
It wasn't a problem, at all, since it was surrounded by everyone.
After defeating one group of monsters, we enter the waiting room.

"This time, I will have you experience a boss battle. There is no need to deliberately receive an attack. Also, since I will be taking care of the small fry, you will confront the boss with Roxanne and the others, Vesta."
"Understood."

While I give instructions to Vesta, we head to the boss room.
To suddenly experience a boss battle on a higher floor… it would have been a better idea to let her gradually gain experience.
Currently, Roxanne will take on the boss from the front while the rest will surround it from the back.
However, the degree of difficulty will depend on the monster that will appear with the boss.

Smoke gathers, monsters appear.
An OysterShell and a Clamshell.
I go around to the opposite side for it may spit water.
While glancing at the four of them fighting the boss, I finish off the Clamshell with Durandal.

Vesta seems to be doing well, huh?
Roxanne dodges the boss' attack by a hair's breadth. She slashes at the same time.
Just by being large, she stands out.
And she is strong as well.

After sweeping the Clamshell up, I go next to Sherry and join the attack on the boss.
Sherry takes a step back and thrusts her spear from the back.
All of us surround it and attack.

No matter which floor's boss it is, once it gets like this, it becomes one sided.
Oystershell can't even land an attack.
As long as it is aiming for Roxanne.

Vesta strikes the monster from behind with her steel sword.
I heard 'bokuu' sound, the shell might have got dented. Anyways, the Oystershell has collapsed.

Did Vesta finish it off this time?
As the number of people increases, it will be harder for me to land the killing blow, I guess.

“You did it.”
“Yes, thank you very much. I am satisfied with the current level of my attack. Ever since I became a dragon knight, I have been noticing that some of my attacks are stronger than the rest and do more damage than I normally do. Perhaps, this attack was one of them.”

I see. Critical, huh?
So this was due to the Dragon Knight job’s Critical Outbreak skill.
The one using it seems to be able to notice it, too.
Because it is not an active skill, they don’t know about it being the Critical Outbreak skill.

And there is no apparent effect of the Critical Outbreak skill.
Had I not heard the loud sound from that spectacular attack, even I’m not sure if I would have noticed it.
Do only those receiving the critical strike notice it?
I would prefer not to notice it, then.

“Such an overwhelming attack it was. Can anyone else deliver such an attack beside a dragon knight?”
“I haven’t heard about it.”

I tried to ask Vesta if other jobs beside Dragon Knight have Critical Outbreak skill, but she doesn’t seem to be aware of any such job.

“Sherry?”
“I didn’t hear anything authentic, but if you are talking about a strong attack, then anyone can do it.”
“It is fine even if it is a rumor.”

I wonder if there are any rumors.

“Does Roxanne-san know anything related?”
“I don’t know but…”
“Apparently, when a beast warrior undergoes training for a long time, they can get the Beast King job. As for the King of Beasts, I have heard stories

that he was able to do a massive attack."
"Is that so? I didn't know about that."

As expected of Sherry. To know something that even Roxanne, who belongs to the wolfkin tribe, doesn't know about.
Absolutely bewildering.
However, Beast King seems to be an advanced job for beast warriors.
Would it do even if you're a wolf?

"As expected of Sherry."
"But I don't know if it is true of not."

Is it possible that the Beast King job has the Critical Outbreak skill, too?
It is a racial job since it is an advanced job for beast warriors.
It is regrettable that I can't get it.

However, both Dragon Knight and Beast King have it, seemingly, so it won't be strange for other racial jobs to have it, too.
Wouldn't it be possible for the advancement of Sex Maniac job to have the Critical Outbreak skill, too?

"Ah, give that volley to Vesta."
"Yes, desu."

I tell Miria as she picks up the item dropped by the Oystershell. Miria takes it to Vesta.

"Is that fine?"
"You probably need it."
"Yes, thank you very much."

Vesta receives the volley from Miria.

"Onee-chan, desu."

For some reason, Miria is proud.
Well, it doesn't matter either way.
She is looking at me as if she wants to say something.

I wonder if she wants to say something regarding the Beast King job.

“Let’s move to the 18th floor, then?”
“…Yes, desu.”

We leave the boss room.
Huh?
Miria has her head drooped.

Ah, I see.
I get what Miria wanted to say.

I am supposed to let Vesta experience 17th floor’s boss battle after 16th floor’s.
And she wants Quratar’s 17th floor instead of Haruba’s.
It is about Black Diamond Tuna.
That’s what it’s about.

“Ah, I just remembered something. I still have the lean tuna from the last time in my Item Box. Miria, we will use it for tomorrow’s dinner. Do you want to make something with it?”
“Yes, desu.”

This should be good enough for Miria to regain her enthusiasm.
However, from now on, it will be more difficult for me to land the killing blow on the boss.
I can promise to keep killing in Haruba until we get fatty tuna, but would it be alright?
It will be hard to keep killing Black Diamond Tuna until it drops fatty tuna.

How do I do it is the main problem.
Is Cook’s ‘Increased Rate of Rare Drop’ effective only if I deliver the finishing blow?
Or maybe I should change everyone to Cook and then challenge it?
But it will require a lot of work to reach Explorer Lv30.

Would the rate of rare drop increase by 5 times if everyone in the party is a cook?
Or not?
Even if I can’t confirm the rate of rare drop increasing by 5 times, I can confirm if it will work without my delivering the killing blow.
For future Black Diamond Tuna battles.

“Sherry, does Oystershell drop oyster?”
“Yes.”
“To celebrate Vesta joining our party, how about we have Oysters for dinner tonight?”

I propose.
Earlier, I fought Oystershell without selecting Cook.
My objective was volley.
Now I will select cook, and see how many oysters it drops.

“Because oyster is expensive, it is common for a master to sell it or eat it themselves. The possibility for us to eat it…”
“No, everyone will be eating if, of course. Vesta, too. You don’t want to eat it?”

Because Sherry starts spouting strange things, I ask for Vesta’s support.
It is useless to solicit Miria’s support for anything beside fish.

“Err… yes, if we can get one.”

Vesta can probably read the mood, too.
Good girl.

I use Dungeon Walk to move.
We jump from the small room to the waiting room. Before entering the boss room, I select Cook.
I leave Alchemist on, and remove Monk.

It is better to have Monk in case of emergencies, but with the way we are fighting at the moment, I don’t have to be worried.
And if I removed Alchemist, the Plating I cast would wear off. It would be a waste.
During the battle, I receive a body blow from the Clamshell. How amusing.
I can recover using Durandal’s HP Absorption skill.

This time around, I was the one to land the killing blow on the Oystershell.
The boss turns into smoke, dissipates, and leaves volley behind.
It didn’t work?

“Volley isn’t particularly bad.”
“I think it will be alright.”
“Vesta can have it, then. If it is about to run out, say so.”
“Yes, thank you very much.”

I may forget how many she has in stock, so I tell Vesta to inform me.
Even if I forget, it will be fine to leave it to her.
It may be difficult for her to inform me, her Master, so I have no choice but to make her do that.

We try again.
This time, even though it was Sherry who finished it off using her spear, an oyster was left behind.
When the smoke dissipates, a milky-white, jiggling object remains.
It is an oyster.

Is it only the content inside the shell?
It would somehow resemble volley if the shell was attached.
When I use Appraisal, it properly appears as oyster.
I pick it up carefully, and put it inside my Item Box.

“So, is this an oyster? How do we eat it.”
“You can bake it. Or probably boil it? I had it once when I was a kid, so I don’t remember the details.”

Sherry seems to have eaten it before.
Can’t we eat it raw?
Would it feel disgusting?
It is an item dropped by a monster, after all. So far, I haven’t attempted to eat one raw.

It’s about my palm’s size.
Oystershell seemed large, but I am not sure if this one can be considered large.
I would like one for everyone.
Because it was killed by Sherry this time, it is perhaps possible for the effect of Cook’s ‘Increased Rate of Rare Drop’ to be shared by other party members, so I need not kill it myself.

I try it once more to get one for everyone.
I try it again.
and again.

I try it many times.
I try it once again.
I keep saying it because it is important.

“It dropped one more. As expected of Master.”
“Amazing, desu.”
“Is that so?”

Roxanne and Miria are praising me.
No, not at all. I did it twenty or so times before I managed to get 5 pieces.
Yet, it wasn’t that bad.

I still don’t know if the effect of ‘Increase Rate of Rare Drop’ is shared by the party or not.
It didn’t always drop oyster when I killed it. However, it felt more likely for it to drop oyster when I killed it.
In the first place, I don’t even know the drop rate of oyster.

Well, I guess it will be alright when we fight Black Diamond Tuna.
I will not need 20 rounds to get one.
I move to the 18th floor.
There was no problem with the 16th floor, so the 18th floor will be fine, too, I guess.

“Until you receive an attack, Vesta, you only need to observe. If one of the monsters remains, step forward and try to receive its attack. There may be many poison-type monsters, so be careful.”
“Okay. It will probably be alright.”
“There is a group of Fly Traps and Clamshell around here. There seem to be multiple Fly Traps, but only one Clamshell.”

I thought we could fight only poison-type monsters, Fly Traps and Kettle Mermaids, but Roxanne easily found a group with just one Clamshell.
Roxanne is amazing.
First I sweep both the Fly Traps using [Fire Storm].
The problem with Clamshell is that it is strong against fire magic.

While I cast [Sand Ball], we surround the remaining Clamshell.
Vesta steps in front.
She receives a body blow from the Clamshell.

I apply Plating again, and cast another earth spell.
I tried to finish it off right away using magic, but it didn't drop down with just one.
Roxanne exchanges places with Vesta.
I cast another [Sand Ball]. The Clamshell collapses.

Like I thought, it took some time to deal with the shell.
It was fine, though, since we did not receive any other attack.

"How was it?"
"If it's this much, there is no problem. It might have been the effect of this hat, but I think I will be fine even with more attacks. Also, the shield may not be necessary anymore."
"Then, you do not have any problem with standing in front?"
"Yes. Ah, this much recovery is fine."

Vesta asks for me to stop after just one Heal.
You don't need a shield, even though it's the 18th floor?
Damage Reduction skill is fearsome.
It is perhaps thanks to Plating, too.

Chapter 130 - Miniskirt

Thereafter, we fought on the 18th floor.
Is Vesta having trouble?
She received many attacks, but she isn't complaining.

"Alright. I know it is a little early but how about we call it a day? We have yet to go shopping."
"We are going shopping?"

Roxanne jumps at it.
I was thinking of buying some stuff for Vesta.
Will Roxanne be fine with it even if the stuff is not for her?

I must buy a maid outfit and apron for Vesta.
Because of her large body, I'm not sure if a maid outfit will look good on her or not, but an apron will fit nicely.
It is also necessary to buy her a nightgown.

"We will go to the clothing store in the Imperial Capital first."
"A negligee for Vesta is necessary."

I can clearly see Roxanne's desire to choose.
It is better than complaining, though.

"For me?"
"I am going to have various outfits made for Vesta."
"Thank you very much."

Vesta bows her head.

"I know there was a lot of trouble today, it being the first day and all, but I look forward to your help from now on."
"Yes. I thought the monsters inside the labyrinth would be extremely tough, but they weren't that strong. I think I will be okay."

She is neither complaining nor whining.
When her Dragon Knight's level increases further, it will get even easier.
It is terrific, really.

I warp us to the Imperial Capital.
We head outside the adventurers' guild.
Vesta is not gawking around that much.

"Has Vesta visited the Imperial Capital before?"
"No, I haven't."
"Is that so?"
"It is because I am merely accompanying you."

I wonder if it's just that.
We proceed to go to the clothing store.

"We are here."
"Umm, but this is such an extravagant shop."
"It is alright."
"Is it really alright?"

I wonder if she will follow me inside.
I enter the shop.
Vesta, who was admiring the the entrance, follows me inside.

"Welcome. Great to see you back."

The usual male attendant approaches accompanied by two female assistants.

"Is it possible to make another apron like the one I ordered the other day?"
"Yes, of course."
"She will be the one to wear it this time."

I place my hands on Vesta's shoulders.
It will be quite large, about up to my face.

I don't think it will be problem, though, for it is Order-Made.

“Thank you very much. I will need to take the measurements, then.”
“Here, please.”

When the male attendant winks, the female assistant steps in front of Vesta.
She curtsies.
And shows Vesta the direction using her hands.

“Umm”
“Go.”

I thought for a moment and concluded that it would be better for her to do it individually.
It’s not like both of them need to try clothes on.

“Next is this one. Is there a size that will fit the girl from before?”

Roxanne and the rest move to satin camisole section.

“These are all ready-made, so these are all the sizes we have.”
“This one? Looks like she can put it on, probably.”
“I think the shoulder width is good enough.”

The female shop assistant answers.
They didn’t have a small one for Sherry either.
There can’t be that many sizes.

“Let me think.”
“But the hem seems to be a little small.”
“Hmm, what should we do?”
“If you need a different size, then you will need to place a special order.”

Is the hem short?
That is good in itself.

While Roxanne was in a dilemma, Vesta comes back.
Roxanne tries the camisole on Vesta’s body.
The hem of the camisole reaches Vesta’s knees.
Isn’t that a good length?

“As expected, it is too short, isn’t it?”
“It is indeed short.”
“Too short, desu.”
“I guess it is.”
“For now, let’s buy it. It is better than going to the trouble of having one made.”

I cut in a hurry as they were voicing same opinion.
No, No.
This length is long enough.

“Is that so? But it will be useless to expend on something she can’t wear.”
“It will be fine.”

There’s no such thing as ‘she can’t wear’, at least.
In this world, there is no schoolgirl wearing miniskirt.
Neither there is onee-san wearing miniskirt, nor onee-sama wearing miniskirt.
Like hell I will let this chance slip away.

“Only white and black colors are available for this size, however.”

Isn’t that good? Black.
Bewitching aura will match big Vesta perfectly.
As if I will let me myself get manipulated by the shop assistant into placing an order.

“Is black good, Vesta?”
“Is it alright?”
“It is alright.”

Sherry wears white.
Roxanne plays the central role, and picks black camisole.
Roxanne brings the item I chose.

“Then, can I order this as well? Also, take care of these rabbit furs.”

From my Item Box I take out rabbit furs, and leave them at the counter.

“Ah, was the dear customer not a member of the order of Harz knights?”

The male attendant mutters.
Did he think of me as a member of the order of knights.
My identity was discovered at the unlikeliest of places.

Is it about the timing of the rabbit furs?
Is it possible that a member of the order of knights is not supposed to sell at a store?
Nope. I have sold rabbit furs before.
Is there something else?

Because I don't think it is a good idea to ask, I checkout and leave the store.
It could cause trouble if backfired.

"That attendant seems to think Master is a member of the order of knights."

Roxanne speaks proudly as we came out of the store.

"I wonder what it was about."
"It is natural for anyone who sees Master. That attendant could see Master's greatness."

I am afraid as to how easy it is for people to deceive Roxanne.
'Click here to see the great Master'.

"Most of the people doing exploration are rude. Because you were showing proper manners, he assumed that you belong to the order of knights."

It sounds rational if Sherry says so.
What is considered manners by modern Japanese people, is considered proper manners here?
It is probably so.

"Brahim language, desu."

No wonder.
It is perhaps because I can speak Brahim.

"Ah, that's it."
"Yes, desu."

It is something only Miria, who is struggling with Brahim, can think of.
I pat her cat ears to praise her.

Next up is the armor shop.
I warp us to Quratar's adventurers' guild, then walk from there.

"Is this platemail?"
"Yes, It is."

After we enter the store, I confirm with Vesta as we look for platemails.
Steel platemail.
This?

It is not full armor. Rather, it is basically a metal cylinder covering from shoulder up till waist.
As for the waist potion, there's something, which resembles a skirt, fluttering. I'm in luck.
It's not separate but integrated.

I wonder if she will look like a badly designed robot when she wears it.
But then, I wonder how you can even wear it. Maybe it can open up into two from the side?

It looks heavy no matter how you look at it.
I try to lift it by hand.
It is not to the point where I can't hold it, but it is heavy.
Can you go around the labyrinth wearing this?

"Oh, this one here is frilly and looks better."
"It has tassets, too. Other than that, it doesn't look much different from mine."

Sherry tells me about it.
Tassets?
Even if you say it is different, I don't see any difference.
There are only three empty skill slots on it.

"It's Heavy. Vesta, will you be able to wear it?"
"Let me see. I think it will be alright."

Vesta raises the steel platemail.
That's strange.
It seemed lighter when Vesta lifted it.
Maybe it gets subjected to correction when someone from the dragonkin tribe carries it?

"Will this armor be fine?"
"Yes, it is plenty. Thank you very much."

I move to other shelves.
I choose steel gauntlets and steel demi-greaves to go with the platemail.
They are bracers and footwear made of steel.

Steel demi-greaves have knee-length leg guards attached to them.

From the equipment containing free skill slots, I let Vesta choose.
I pass on the head equipment.
She would look like a proper knight if she were to wear a full-face helm.
However, Strengthened Hard Leather Hat will go to waste if that happened.

"Choose the one you like."
"Okay."

I leave it to Vesta, and go back to the counter.
I hate carrying heavy objects.

"Large shield, you have any for sale?"
"The shield for dragonkin, eh? Sadly, I don't have them here in my shop."
"I see. In that case, I am good."

I tried to ask the shop clerk, but as I suspected, he doesn't sell large shields.
Since it is not here, there's nothing I can do.
There doesn't seem to be much damage on the 18th floor, so Vesta's Dual Wielding is good for now.

"I would like this one."

Vesta and the others bring protective gear over.
Sherry had steel gauntlets, Miria had steel demi-greaves, Vesta was carrying steel platemail in her arms.

She couldn't carry them all?
It is quite difficult, indeed.

I pay the amount and put them in my Item Box.
Even the big platemail fits nicely inside the Item Box.
I am grateful.

"How about buying food ingredients after this? Since I will be cooking the oysters, can I ask of you to make another dish?"
"Please leave it to me."

I ask of Roxanne after we left the armor shop.
Since no one seems to know how to cook oyster, I have to be the one to do it.
When we arrive at home, I wash the oysters well, then dredge them in wheat flour and sauté them in butter.
Once I apply the lemon juice, which I will ask Vesta to squeeze. It will be done.

Vesta squeezes the lemon with ease.
It feels like a small mandarin instead of a lemon that is being squeezed.
From now on, I will have her help me to the utmost of her ability.

The butter sautéed oyster went quite well.
The oysters were cooked pretty nicely. The inside is soft and rich in taste.
The sour tinge of the lemon added a good accent to the taste.

"The cooking of Master is absolutely the best."
"It is as good as expected. I really feel like it had the same kind of taste as back then."
"Tasty, desu."
"Is it really okay for me to be eating such extravagant food?"

It seems popular with the four of them.

"Vesta, try on your protective gear after the dinner is over. It will be a problem if you get confused tomorrow morning."
"Okay. Understood."

I talk while eating an oyster.
Albeit large, because there was just one for each of us, the oysters vanished right away.
There is nothing I can do about it.

After the dinner, I had Vesta try on the platemail.
When I thought that it would be dark in the early morning, it is better to have her try it out once before that.

“How is it? You think you can wear it alone?”
“It may be difficult to wear it alone.”
“I thought so.”
“Do, desu.”

Miria opens the platemail and lifts it up.
She’s puts it on Vesta’s body, and closes it.
She seems to have fitted into it.

“Miria, thank you.”
“Onee-chan, desu.”
“Thank you very much.”

Vesta expresses her gratitude.
Next, she wears the demi-greaves.

“I should have put on the demi-greaves first.”

Vesta rues.
She puts the gauntlets on as well.
I guess it was hard for her to bend her body after wearing the platemail.
It was a good decision to have had her try it now.

The steel equipment are more stylish than I thought.
I was wrong to think she would look like a badly-designed robot.
Her body lines are being emphasized, without it being too tight.
Her figure is gorgeous.

No matter how you look at it, she looks like a reverse-trap.
There’s probably no such thing as reverse-trap in this world.
I would like to call her Oscar.

“It fits you well. Is it heavy?”
“A little bit, but I believe I will be fine.”

So it is heavy, after all, huh?
Is she perhaps not able to do anything but stand there?
After having her try them on, I make her take them off immediately.

Thereafter, I have her take off her clothes, and go to the bathroom.
To wipe the sweat off with hot water.
After cleaning the sweat, she puts on the camisole negligee.

“So, how is it, Vesta? You were able to put it on?”
“Yes. But umm, the hem is short.”

When I enter the bedroom, Vesta was wearing the black camisole.
Because of her big chest, the camisole looked more lifted than it was supposed to be.
Just like… a pyramid?
I would like to call it King Khufu.

“Ooh, Isn’t it better?”
“Thank you very much. But it is embarrassing since it is too short.”

The hem was a little above her knees.
It isn’t that short, even though it is called ‘mini’.
She will be embarrassed if her knee caps were visible, especially since miniskirt is not known in this world.
I would name it Twiggy.

That’s how enchanted I am.
In Japan, pushing down the girls wearing miniskirts was unthinkable.
Shit.
I can’t wait.

I make her sit down on the side of the bed.
Her thighs get exposed further when she sits down.
And because of the black colored camisole, her charm blooms even more.
This extreme charm can’t be imitated.

I pull Vesta into my embrace.
I touch her knees.
The soft and smooth feeling between the satin hem and her bare legs is incredible.

While my hands were feeling her body, my lips go for hers.
As for the order of kissing before going to sleep, Roxanne is last.
Which makes Vesta first.

I'm grateful for this order.
Good job me, who came up with this order.

Chapter 131 - 19th Floor

The last night was hot.
I was clinging to Vesta when I woke up this morning.
Her cold body felt good.
After spring, comes summer, apparently.

Under the dim light, I get up.
Miria brings my shirt in a frenzy.
Vesta required her help putting on her equipment.
Vesta expresses her gratitude.

“Miria, thanks.”
“Okay, desu.”

After I put on my equipment, I express my gratitude, too.
After having confirmed that everyone was geared up, I cast Warp.
Vesta is fine, apparently.

We move to the labyrinth.
It’s not particularly hot inside the labyrinth.
Temperature here seems to be maintained, somehow.
It must be cold outside Haruba for it is situated in the north.

Michio Kaga | Male | 17 years old
Explorer Lv44 | Hero Lv40 | Wizard Lv42 | Monk Lv42 | Bounty Hunter Lv1
Equipment | Rod of Offerings | Hard Leather Hat | Alba | Dragon Leather Gloves | Dragon Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | ♀ | 16 years old
騎士Lv24
Knight Lv24
Equipment | Estoc | Steel Shield | Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Dragon Leather Jacket | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes of Willow | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | ♀ | 16 years old
鍛冶師Lv33
Master Smith Lv33
Equipment | Steel Spear of Authority | Hard Leather Hap | Chainmail | Water Resistant Leather Mittens | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Miria | ♀ | 15 years old
海女Lv33
Diver Lv33
Equipment | Rapier | Iron Shield | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail |
Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Vesta | ♀ | 15 years old
竜騎士Lv11
Dragon Knight Lv11
Equipment | Steel Sword | Iron Sword | Strengthened Hard Leather Hat | Steel Platemail | Steel Gauntlets | Steel Demi-greaves | Sacrificial Misanga

Because Vesta now has better equipment, there's no need for Plating.
I decide to remove Alchemist in order to level up Bounty Hunter.
If I use Fourth job, I can reduce Required Experience to 1/20th and increase Gained Experience to 20x, but it can't be helped.

I can't do without Monk.
Explorer, Hero, and Wizard are indispensable, too, so I can't remove these four.
For the time being, if I need Cook or Warrior, I will use Fifth job.

"Vesta seems to be able to fight. For now, during the exploration, let her stand in the center of the front. There is no need to be worried about the number or the type of monsters."

I issue instructions to Roxanne.
Instead of adding a Fifth job, I decide to change the activity pattern in the labyrinth.
Since all the party members are here, there's no need to take it slow, is there?

My jobs hardly level up after going past Lv40.
Also, both Sherry's and Miria's jobs are leveling up slowly after hitting 30s.
It is probably because we are not challenging floors appropriate for our level.
The only difference between Sherry & others and myself is the Required Experience 1/10th skill, If I'm not wrong.

As someone level 30-40, I am sure we are supposed to challenge higher floors.
If we move up the floors, the experience we gain will increase, and so will our level.
I was well aware of it but I put our safety first. However, it is about time to advance more aggressively.

During boss battles, we usually surround them, while I finish them off from the back.
When I step forward and use Durandal, I can use HP Absorption skill.
Roxanne, naturally, and Miria, too, hardly receive attacks.
It is perhaps more logical for us to challenge higher floors.

Even so, that doesn't mean I have to jump to a higher floor right away.
I will continue to move up one floor at a time like I have been.
I will have to speed up a bit, that's what I mean.

We advance mechanically along the wall of the labyrinth.
Roxanne is still guiding us, but I don't care about the monsters now.
We can change the direction according to the monsters ahead, but there is no need to stop.
The encounters with the groups of monsters have decreased. We are encountering lone monsters more.

One, or maybe two?
Or sometimes, a group of two Fly Traps and one Clamshell.
I am deeply moved by how Roxanne has managed to avoid them thus far.

I cast [Firestorm] on a group of two Fly Traps and one Clamshell, and prepare for the encounter.
The Clamshell is resistant to fire magic, but the Fly Traps are weak against fire. Since there is more of the latter, it is probably better to use it.
The vanguards and the monsters clash.

Roxanne with her estoc, Miria with her rapier, slash at them.
Vesta cuts them using her dual swords.
Vesta receives the counter attack of the Fly Trap using the steel sword in her right, and using the iron sword in her left hand, she smashes the monster down.
When the monster attacks her from the left, she blocks it using the iron sword in her left hand, and using the steel sword in her right, she smashes it on the ground with a swing from the top.

Is this the dual sword style?
It is terrifying.
What would I do if I were against an opponent like her?
There will be no problem if she can fend off monsters' attacks in this fashion.

After I finish off the Fly Traps using fire spell, we surround the remaining Clamshell.
It's especially scary when it attacks from the side.
Vesta takes it down using both her swords at the same time
The spectacle looks like someone beating a drum.

The Clamshell desperately hurls its body.
It tries to attack Vesta from the side, but Vesta receives it with her sword.
Rather than receiving the attack, it was more like offsetting the attack with a slash.

Had it attacked Roxanne instead, she would have dodged it lightly.
You can't tell if it is a Clamshell anymore.
I shoot a [Sand Ball]. The shell collapses.
It was settled immediately.

"It was a long battle but it didn't look like anyone had a hard time. I guess it will be fine if we advance to higher floors as we are."
"Yes. As we are, there should not be any problem."

Roxanne says.
Rather, if there were an enemy strong even for Roxanne, everyone except her would get wiped out.

"Vesta doesn't seem to have any problem."
"Yes, I am fine."

“It was an impressive attack.”
“Thank you very much.”

Because I have changed her equipment, I am not using Plating anymore. I should perhaps let an attack hit Vesta on purpose, but I don’t want to make it a habit.
Receiving an attack is not a pleasant experience.
It is better not to force her do it.
And I made her do it only yesterday.

Judging from yesterday, I feel that she would be fine even if received several attacks.
At the very least, there is no chance for her to die from a single blow.
The way she fights, she will end up receiving an attack anyway.

Even though I was of that idea, we reached the boss room of Haruba’s 18th floor without Vesta having received a single attack.
Is it thanks to the change in our pattern of exploration?
I should be happy about the fact that she didn’t receive any attack.

I bring Durandal out, and enter the boss room.
I knock down the Kettle Mermaid and the Animal Trap.

During the boss battles, I could transfer Durandal to Vesta and became a fort myself. But it might not be the most offensive formation.
Since I can use Rush, it’s not a waste.
Even though I can make Vesta a warrior, too, I can use Incantation Interruption myself.
In addition, if I have Durandal, I can move freely in case something happens.

Now that I think about it, because I use Durandal, the boss battles feel naturally easier.
I wonder how the boss battles will go if I don’t use Durandal?
Will it be a tough fight?
As long as Roxanne continues to dodge.

In short, we seem to be able to win.
I mean, it’s not like there’s a need to use our maximum firepower.
As far as attacking capability is concerned, I can also use Durandal while casting spells.
Currently, however, there’s no need for that.

“The monster native to Haruba’s 19th floor is Rub Shrub.”
“It’s weak against fire magic, right?”
“That’s right.”

We proceed to 19th floor while Sherry briefs.
So, following Fly Traps on 18th floor, there are Rub Shrubs on 19th floor, both of which are weak against fire.
It looks like the battles on Haruba’s 19th floor will be relatively easier.

“Roxanne, can you first guide us to a place with just Rub Shrubs, please?”
“Certainly. This way.”

While advancing under Roxanne’s guidance, we come across three Rub Shrubs.
Because there were only Rub Shrubs, I baked them well.

“What was that? Can’t it fight, at all?”
“As expected of Master.”

Not at all. Whether it can fight or not depends on whether the vanguards can take on its attacks or not.
That and my magic create a good balance resulting in this extermination speed.
As we move up the floors, the number of magic attacks required to finish them off will increase, too.

“It is still early but how about leaving the labyrinth for now, and then break through Quratar’s 18th floor before the afternoon?”
“Very well. I guess it will be better.”

After I obtain Roxanne’s consent, we take some rest.
Vesta has yet to receive any attack.
I can safely bet on Quratar’s 18th floor.

“Roxanne, along the way, try to find a place with a lot of Ma Breams.”
“Understood.”

I hand Roxanne the map, and take us to Quratar’s 18th floor.
I remove Bounty Hunter Lv25 and select Cook.
As expected, Bounty Hunter leveled up quickly.

“Miria, we will be having lean tuna today, so how about having whole fish for dinner tomorrow?”
“Yes, desu.”

I shouldn’t spoil her too much.
I should avoid having a fish everyday.
We head to the boss room of Quratar’s 18th floor.

We advance under Roxanne’s guidance.
We fought a large number of Ma Breams.
We encounter a group of three Ma Breams and two Pig Hogs.
Pig Hog has resistance against earth magic, which is the weakness of Ma Bream, but the items they drop are important.

When I cast [Sandstorm], three Ma Breams and a Pig Hog step in front.
The remaining Pig Hog falls back.
Roxanne makes a preemptive attack, and thrusts her Estoc.
Vesta strikes using her swords as well.

One of the Ma Breams charges at Miria, but she blocks the attack using her shield.
Vesta receives the Pig Hog’s head butt with her iron sword, and returns the favor with an attack using her steel sword at the same time.
Two Mabreams start attacking Roxanne, who was in the center, but Roxanne manages to dodge them perfectly.
How did she even manage to dodge the attacks coming from left and right at the same time?

Yellow magic formation appears under the Pig Hog, but Sherry cancels it using her spear.
Another magic formation appears under the Pig Hog in the back.

“Here it comes.”

The Pig Hog spits out mud.
Roxanne easily dodges it, so does Sherry.
It seems there was no problem this time around, too.

I finish the three Ma Bream off with another [Sandstorm].
I then switch to [Water Storm], and tidy up the remaining two.
It took some time, but that’s okay.

Fighting against a group of monsters with opposite weaknesses and resistances, we managed to fight without any trouble.

“Whole fish, desu.”

Miria brings over the whole fish.
Apparently, One of the three Ma Breams dropped a whole fish.
With this, I now have two.

“Are two whole fish enough?”
“Yes, desu.”

When I ask Miria, she replies energetically.
But that’s just her.
Are two really enough for everyone?
Well, Vesta doesn’t particularly seem to eat a lot.

However, it would be troublesome if they were to hold a grudge against each other due to reduced share.
That said, it will be difficult to increase the serving to one each.
Is two fine, then?
Well, it’s your Onee-chan who decided that.

“Since we have got two whole fish, we will now head straight to the boss room.”
“Understood.”

I issue instructions to Roxanne, and remove Cook.
Vesta still hasn’t received any attack.
My next bet was on the small chance during the boss battle, but even that failed.

She did not receive any damage even during the boss battle.
Originally, during the boss battles, there is hardly any chance for anyone except for Roxanne to receive an attack.
Aside from me, who deals with the small fry at the start of the boss battle.
Incidentally, there is no chance for Roxanne to get hit.

“The monster native to Quratar’s 19th floor is Rtoll Troll. Its attacks don’t contain poison but there is a chance for its attacks to inflict paralysis. It is resistant to wind magic, and weak against fire magic.”

After finishing of the boss, we receive briefing from Sherry on 19th floor.

“Let’s try to fight at least once. Roxanne, please guide us.”
“This way.”

We proceed under Roxanne’s guidance.
Two hairy, grey monsters appear.
Rtoll Troll Lv19.
An ape man. No, it looks more like an old geezer you can find wandering on the streets.

I can’t tell where its eyes are since it is covered fully in hair.
Besides, it really looks bad.
It doesn’t resemble a human even a tiny bit.
It is a monster, after all.

I cast [Firestorm].
The Rtoll Trolls approach slowly with their big feet.
So huge.
Almost as big as Vesta.

When they close in, they raise their hairy arms up, and smack down.
Roxanne, with a sway, dodges it.
The second one attacks Miria.
Miria, too, manages to evade it, somehow.

Before we receive another attack, I cast another [Firestorm].
Vesta turns to it’s side, and attacks using both her swords.
Sherry pierces it with her spear.
Eventually, I burn them down using another fire spell. The Rtoll Trolls drop down.

“This is all, huh?”

It was a monster we fought for first time, but it wasn’t a strong one.
It will stay like this up to 22nd floor, I guess.

Until the battles become more difficult, it will be hard to raise level by even 1, it seems.
If that's the case, I guess we can afford to move further up.

"Even this floor is not much of a problem. As expected of Master."
"Rtoll Trolls don't pose any threat."
"Yes, desu."
"I think it will be alright."

Setting what Roxanne said aside, if even Sherry says there is no problem with Rtoll Trolls, it must really be the case.

"Today, Vesta did not receive any attack on 18th floor. Will you be alright fighting on 19th floor like that?"
"Yes. I barely felt any pain from yesterday's attacks, so I think I will be alright."

Is Vesta really alright?
Because she herself says she is alright, I guess she really is.
There is a possibility that she has high tolerance for pain.
Nah, she realized it probably when I was healing her. She stopped me after just one cast, so I guess it is not the case.

Even if it is 19th floor, I don't think she will be done in with a single blow.
And if it does come to pass, Sacrificial Misanga will activate.
I guess we will be fine fighting on 19th floor as we are.

Chapter 132 - Hamburger meat

“Is it nearly evening? We might stop here.”
“It is.”

We searched Haruba’s 19th floor until evening, and then I spoke with Roxanne and decided to finish it up.
Vesta wasn’t exposed to any attacks today afterall.

If there is only one demon, Roxanne takes it on. Miria is in the front if there is a second.
When the vanguard has three people, each of them is in a one vs one, and the difficulty isn’t that high.
We’ve gone through a lot of demons so far, but should we increase the difficulty?
Defeating a lot of demons at once is good efficiency, it’s the best way.

“We’ll go to the first floor before we finish. Please lead us to a Cheep Sheep.”
“Certainly.”

Before we finish, I test out [Life and Death] on the first floor.
Bounty Hunter is now Lv26.

It didn’t succeed.
Or maybe my expectation that it’s a skill that defeats demons in a single blow is wrong?
There’s no helping it, so I kill it with Durandal.

Kobold is weaker, so should I try the first floor of Quratar?
Is there no chance to do it there since it’s crowded?
I’ll probably have to keep trying it ever day.

“Are we doing an experiment?”
“A small one.”
“Really?”

Sherry asks with interest.
I don't fight things I can kill in one stroke unless I'm doing something.
Sherry seems to have become familiar with how I do things.
It's good.

We left Quratar's first floor.
We then sold off our items in the adventurers guild.

"Todays dinner. Miria will cook the lean tuna."
"Yes, desu."
"Vesta can help me. I'll make a meat dish."
"I will? I understand."

There is only one lean tuna.
Miria will want to eat the lot.
Therefore, I need to make a main meat dish.

"Then Sherry & I should make a soup and something else?"
"I'll stir-fry some vegetarbles, can you make the soup Roxanne?"
"Okay, lets do that."

Sherry seems to have made the decision for Roxanne as well.
We buy the ingredients, and then return to the house.

"Vesta, do you know about minced meat?"
"I've heard the name."
"Oh, minced meat?"

Roxanne has a delicate expression.
Don't you like it?
Sherry has a similar expression.

"We can't do it?"
"Well…"
"Minced meat is believed to be eaten by poor, crude people. My grandfather never ate it."

Sherry explains.
So there's an annoying taboo like that.

There are people in places on earth that don't eat pig or octopus too.
Is coming accross this sort of thing unavoidable?

"Master eats it…"
"Yes."
"I don't mind, because it's master, but the fact that master eats it should be kept secret."
Roxanne makes a reccomendation.
You'll overlook the taboo?
It seems it's a dish that the lower class eats.
People from the high class don't seem to eat it.
Well, it's definately not a luxury food.
"Is that so?"
"Yes, so please everyone keep this a secret."
"That would be good."
"Yes, desu."
"Ok, I understand."

Roxanne got approval from all the others.
They have "What?" or "Even this?" expressions.
It's quite a variety.

"Will all of you be fine with a dish that uses minced meat?"
"There isn't any problem in our case."

It would be troublesome to change the menu now.
I should just make it, as planned.

"Can you make minced meat Vesta?"
"Ummm."
"If you can finely chop meat then that's good enough."

Roxanne gives instructions to make it.
She seems to have made it before.

"I understand."
"Then please make the minced meat."
"Okay."

The pig ribs from the Pig Hog, and the meat that I bought are passed to Vesta.
They should be suitable to make minced meat.

While Vesta is making the minced meat, I soak some bread in milk, and fry some vegetables.
Firm vegetables like celery.
They are meant to have a crunchy texture, and I add some onion. It should be good with these vegetables.
I add some flour to it as well.

“Good, this is alright. Please mix it like this.”

After making the minced meat, it gets stirred.
Vesta is stirring it with salt, pepper, eggs, vegetables, and torn up bread.
It’s hamburger meat.

We cook it, and then fry some flour, wine, and mushroom in the remaining juices. I add some fish sauce as well, and leave it to boil over the fire.
I don’t know how hamburger meat is normally made, but it seems to be alright?
I put the sauce over it and carry it to the table.

I serve the soup along with the lean tuna that Miria cooked.
The hamburger meat is serverd with the gravy dripped over it.
Even though it’s the first time I made it, it turned out quite good.

“This is delicious. I can’t even notice the bread you added. As expected of Master.”
“Is that so? Using the bread as a filler softens it up.”

Roxanne knew about minced meat, and is probably thinking about a dish that bakes the mince.

“It’s really soft and delicious. Even though it’s something poor people eat, this is delicious, it may have to be reassesed. Even though it’s made from minced meat, it’s amazing.”

Meat is normally cooked intact and then eaten.
Unsuitable meat is turned into minced meat.
It's understandable that it's classified as a low class food.

"As expected, desu."

Despite saying that, Miria's target seems to be locked as the lean tuna.
The broth it was cooked in is also quite good.

"I always get delicious things after coming here. I am very thankful for that."
"Well, you're the one who put the effort into this Vesta."
"No, I didn't do anything special."

It takes quite a bit of effort to make minced meat on your own.
It's easier to just cook steak.
Vesta helped though, so we'll probably make it again some time.

The next day I raised Bounty Hunter to Lv30 and tried [Life and Death] again, but it failed.
The following day I tried again at Lv32, but no luck either.
Is something wrong?
Am I supposed to be doing something else?

Since it targets an enemy, I don't think I'm doing anything wrong.
It's different from skills like [Rush].
I can only trial it on demons.
What else can I do?

Maybe a dead demon will revive because of [Life and death], but that hasn't happened yet either.
I don't think a skill like revival would be easily available.
I had to raise Warrior to Lv30, so I guess I can't say it was easy.

Maybe I need to use it more.
I used it five times on a Cheep Sheep before defeating it with Durandal, so that didn't work either.
I decide to test it more often on the first floor, and start doing it on both my way into and out of the labyrinth starting the next day.
The effects were immediately apparent, and I succeeded after leaving Haruba's labyrinth in the early morning.

A Cheep Sheep collapsed.
I only used [Life and Death].
A single shot.
There is no doubt that it's a skill that kills in one blow.

"Oh?"

Roxanne noticed it straight away.

"It finally worked."
"Um, did you do something Master?"
"Yes."

I answered Roxanne's question.
The opponent didn't even stand a chance.
They couldn't do a thing.
However, it used a lot of Mp.

I've failed at least 20 time since passing Lv30.
The success rate seems to be coniderably low.
It may not be dependant on level too.

"As expected…. it's Master."
"You've been doing an experiment like that up til now?"
"Amazing, desu."
"It feels like something incredible."

As Vesta said, [Life and Death] is an incredible skill.
When watching, it looks like the demon died when nothing happened to it.
Instead of Bounty Hunter, it seems like a skill for an Assassin.
There's no evidence remaining, and no risk.

No, that's only in my case.
Usually you can notice the incantation.
Since I have [Incantation Omission] I can take someones life with an innocent look.
It's something to think about.

"This is definately a secret."
"Of course."

Everyone else gives a nod.
Quietly killing someone without approaching them.
It would be bad if such a thing came to light.

I checked my jobs.
Even though I succeeded at using [Life and Death], I do not have the Gambler's job.
It seems I'll have to level Thief.
I swap Bounty Hunter as my 5th job for Thief.

That day we reached the boss room for Haruba's 19th floor.
Yesterday we ate boiled whole fish.
Tonight we'll have lean tuna.
Either way, Miria will be delighted.

"The boss of Rub Shrub is Rough Shrub. Pay attention because it has a wide attack range, it's a troublesome demon."

Sherry gives an explanation, and then we enter the boss room.
Rough Shrub and Fly Trap appear.
Rough Shrub is a demon that is a similar size to the Rub Shrub.
It's branches extend further than the Rub Shrub though.

First of all, I defeat the Fly Trap using [Rush], since I had switched Thief for Warrior.
Then I joined in the surrounding of the Rough Shrub.
Since it's branches extend, it seems quite a serious opponent.

Rough Shrub swings it's branches.
Roxanne avoids it easily.
If you aren't careful, you can be attacked even at it's sides.

I attack it with [Rush].
But I get counter-attacked.

The branches are a nuisance.
They have a wide range and intense movements.
They are wild branches.

Their attack can probably be recovered with [HP absorbtion].
I continued attacking without worrying.
I use [Rush] many times.

Rub Shrub swings it's branch in return.
I ignore it, and cut it with Durandal.
It's become a slug-fest.
I depend on Durandal's [HP absorption] to continue fighting back.

Since I have Durandal, I won't be defeated.
I can endure the pain.
Even though it's a boss, I won't complain.
The pysical strength increase from Vesta's Dragon Knight might be helping as well.

I finished it off with [Rush].
When I swing Durandal, Rough Shrub shakes violently.
It's knocked down sideways and rolls.
Did we finally defeat it?

"That was amazing. As expected of Master."
"I was a little excited."
"Even though you received many attacks, are you alright?"

Vesta asks about it anxiously.
Unlike Roxanne, the demons attacks hit me, but it's not a problem.
It's not enough for me to worry about.
It's a bit pathetic.

"I can handle it. You said you were hit by demons before numerous times outside the labyrinth as well Vesta."
"That's right. I guess it's alright then."

Am I alright?
Even if it's a Lv1 demon, I don't want to be hit by any attacks.
I'm surprised at what happened as well.
TN: Berserker job aquired!

Though, Vesta has received attacks on the 19th floor and said that it's nothing.
It should be fine even if we go up to the 20th floor.

The boss becomes smoke and disappears.
An item is left behind.
Some kind of fluttering film.
I used [Analyze] and it showed as Wood Shavings.

It looks like it's been cut with a chisel.
Miria picks it up and brings it over.

"Wood Shavings?"
"It's the material for anti-paralysis medicine."

Sherry informs me.
It's material for a medicine?
I switch job to Herbalist, and use [Herbal medicine generation] on the Wood Shavings.

The Wood Shavings in my hand became anti-paralysis medicine.
Some of them spilled from my hand.
I picked them up and placed some in my item box.

"Huh?… oh. It's Master's job?"

Vesta is surprised, but doesn't seem confused.
She's become used to it.

"Put some in your item box as well Sherry."
"Okay."

Sherry puts the anti-paralysis medicine in her item box.
It's good to distribute it in case of an emergency.
Paralysis wears off after a while, so until now we haven't bought any anti-paralysis medecine.

"Sherry, what demon is on Haruba's 20th floor?"
"The demon on the 20th floor is the Hat Bat."

The Hat Bat??
The Fly Trap and Rub Shrub have fire as their weakness.
The Hat Bat has multiple weaknesses, but fire isn't one of them.
There's no choice though.

We went to the 20th floor.
While exploring, we confirm the strength of the Lv20 demons.
Lv20 is a bit stronger.

It's not our limit yet, but it gets more difficult every floor.
How far can we go in our present condition?
It should be fine until the 22nd floor.

Roxanne catches the charge of the Hat Bat with her shield.
Miria dodges an attack from a Rub Shrub.
Vesta also blocks the charge of a Hat Bat with her sword.
I use [Breeze Storm] to attack everything.

I have women fighting as the vanguard, while I shoot magic from the back.
Even if I think about it, there's no other option.
If I'm not hit, I won't need to use the [HP absorbtion] of Durandal.
As expected, it's unlikely that demons would get rapidly stronger here.

Chapter 133 - Coral

We searched for a safe location to have a rest and went to Quratar's 19th floor thereafter.
I hand Roxanne the map.

"Roxanne, can you please take us through the shortest route to the boss room?"
"What should I do if there is group of Ma Breams close by?"
"Ignore them… we will go to 17th floor later."

I added in a hurry because I got scared from Miria's stare.
I need to select Cook to be able to get a whole fish.
And the number of Ma Breams will probably decrease on this floor.
It will be better to hunt Ma Breams on 17th floor.

We head toward the boss room, kicking the monsters we encountered occasionally.
Rtoll Troll's punch looks heavy.
Would I become paralyzed if I received its attack?
I will go numb if I get hit with that, for sure.

Roxanne was easily evading the blows from the Rtoll Trolls.
Maybe it is easy to evade because of the big movement needed for that heavy blow.
If it is Roxanne, she can probably evade them even with her eyes closed.
Her dodging ability is terrifying.

Somehow, Miria is able to block them with her shield, too.
Vesta blocks Rtoll Troll's punch with one of her swords and pays back with the other sword.
Rather than blocking it from the front, I think she parried it from the side.
To be able to accomplish that with only one hand is really amazing.

I roast the monsters while the three confront them.
It should be fine with those three, right?

Do I only need to step forward if there is a problem, from now on?
Because we advanced according to the map, we arrived at the waiting room before I ran out of MP.

“Roll Troll is the boss version of Rtoll Troll. While I believe Roxanne-san will be alright, it seems to deliver intense attacks. It also has a roll attack skill. Also, you need to be cautious because it is capable of using lightning magic and you may get paralyzed if you receive the attack.”

It appears to be really strong from Sherry’s briefing.
But in reality, we can cancel both the magic and the attack skill.
Still, is it possible for a monster to use lightning magic?

We enter the boss room.
Two monsters show up.
A Roll Troll and a Rtoll Troll.
First, I need to ask the old geezer to leave.

I use Durandal to attack the Rtoll Troll.
I step back as I saw it raise its arms.
I match timing of the attack to evade.

I don’t know what the chance of paralysis from its attacks is, but I should avoid receiving any of its attack.
It is better to be careful.
It looked like the movement of its arms stopped when I used [Rush].
I keep attacking while watching the movements of Rtoll Troll.

I somehow managed to dodge the next punch.
It was quite difficult.
Since Roxanne is keeping the boss busy, will it be good idea if I ask either Miria or Vesta to attack the monster from the front?
Or will that make me look miserable?

It may not look as pathetic, perhaps.
However, if I received its attack and got paralyzed, I’ll be in trouble.
Even though Sherry has anti-paralysis pills, I will need to evacuate to safe location first to take the medicine.
Even if I assume that Roxanne will continue to take care of the boss, the whole formation will collapse.

While watching the monster's movements, I evoke another [Rush].
The Rtoll Troll collapses.
I somehow managed to defeat it without receiving any attack.
Without wasting time, I join the encirclement of the boss.

The boss Roll Troll, like the Rtoll Troll, is densely covered in gray hair. It is an ape man with bent back.
Because its back is bent, it is shorter than Vesta.
I wonder if it can straighten it.
And I wonder if it will be taller.

Roxanne dodges the Roll Troll's attack easily like it is nothing.
She swings her body a little and easily evade the next attack.

That attack looked quite scary, though.
A considerable wind pressure came just by having the attack from its strong arms pass by.
It should be much stronger since it is the boss.

Roxanne, like always, is evading the monster's attacks by mere millimeters.
Terrifying.
Well, as long as Roxanne can keep dodging, we will be able to finish it off with our encirclement.

With everybody surrounding it, I slash it.
I hit it with a [Rush]. Sherry pierces it with her spear. Vesta hammers it with her two swords.
Oh. Vesta's attack just now sounded like a critical.
She viciously hit the bent back of the Roll Troll.

Chance of Critical… apparently, it is not that high.
I mean, it doesn't really occur that frequently.
Maybe there are times when I missed it or didn't notice it?
Or is it really no more than a few percent?

Maybe it is level dependent and will increase as you level up? But the increase will not be that great.
Even with the bonus skill [Increase in Critical Rate], it doesn't increase that much.
Considering the fact that Increase in Critical Rate starts off with just 5%.

It can be increased by 30% if I use 63 points, therefore, it is hard to think that the basic critical rate is as much as 30%.

Maybe it is 70%?
I will get 100% adding both of them.
All my attacks will become critical.

Most likely, such a thing is impossible. Base critical rate won't be more than 5%.
It will be reasonable if it gets increased by 30%.
Even if it gets increased by 30%, it will be a little over 1/3.
Therefore, I can't depend on critical attacks in battles.

With all the members attacking, and I repeatedly hitting [Rush], we slaughter the Roll Troll.
It looks like Sherry's spear delivered the final blow.
The spear pierced it, the Roll Troll fell.

"From now on, let's split into two groups to beat the monster and the boss. Roxanne and Miria will keep the boss occupied. Can Vesta be the vanguard for the other one?"
"Certainly. I'll be fine."

I instruct Vesta.
Even though it is embarrassing to tell them the reason, if I get in a pinch, I will look pathetic.
I should prioritize safety above all.

The Roll Troll turns into smoke and disappears.
A whitish clump was left behind.
It is iron.
Is iron the item dropped by Roll Troll?

"Thank you."
"Yes, desu."
"If I'm not wrong, does the iron become raw material for iron equipment?"
"That's right. I can't use it yet, though. After 10 years of training, a master smith can stack Iron in order to make iron equipment."

While Miria hands me the iron, I hear the explanation from Sherry.
It is bothersome that a master smith is supposed to make equipment in

order.
Apparently, they can't make a jump.
Assuming she is able to do it, is it possible to do anything with only one piece?
I will keep it in the storeroom since she will use it eventually.
Since they need 10 years of training, it is probably related to level, But the level should be no problem in her case.
Hopefully, it doesn't rust.

"This is iron. iron."
"Iron, desu."

I teach Miria the name of the item and then proceed to 20th floor.
Since it is not related to fish, she will probably forget it by tomorrow.
I wish there was a fish with iron scales.
That would be spiral shell, wouldn't it?

"The monster native to Quratar's 20th floor is Rub Shrub."
"Rub Shrub, huh? Let's go to 17th floor after fighting once. Roxanne, can you please guide us to a place with Rub Shrubs?"
"Understood. This way then."

Under Roxanne's guidance, we fought just one group of Rub Shrubs.
After verifying its strength, we move to 17th floor.
After selecting Cook as fifth job, we hunt Ma Breams.

"Miria, I am planning on making whole fish fry tomorrow. What do you think?"
"Yes, desu."

A positive reply as usual.
There won't be any problem in making mayonnaise since we have Vesta now.
Sweet.

After obtaining two whole fish, we move back to 20th floor.
We explore until evening and then return to Quratar.

"Master, there is a message from Luke. He seems to have successfully bid for Coral Monster Card."

When we return home, there was a message from Luke.
Roxanne reads it.

“Coral? Sherry, what kind of skill does Coral Monster Card give?”
“If attached to a weapon, it gives Inflict Petrifaction skill. If attached to an armor, it give Petrifaction Defense skill. And the effect seems to get enhanced if fused together with a Kobold Monster Card.”

Petrifaction?
Is it a card that is not used much?
Looks interesting.

“Will my magic attacks inflict petrifaction if I attach it to my wand?”
“I have never heard about that. It is impossible, I’m afraid.”
“Well, let’s see. I will go pick it up tomorrow. For now, Vesta, can you make hamburger steak like the one we made the other day?”
“Certainly.”

I hand pork and meat to Vesta.
It will be aibiki, after all. (TN: Pork and beef ground together)

“Since Vesta will be making the hamburger steak, give me a hand, Miria.”
“Yes, desu.”

And so, I ask Miria to make mayonnaise.
Actually, I will be dividing the work between all members.
Roxanne and Sherry whip the eggs in their spare time.

The burden is ⅕ if you divide it between five people.
I blend it, too.
And it will be done with Vesta blending in the last.
Vesta keeps blending it.

While Vesta is blending the mayonnaise, I make the minced pork and meat into small and round balls instead of hamburger steak from last time. I then dredge it in slime starch and the fry it in oil.
After frying it, I apply sweet bean jam and sour vinegar, and then deep fry it.
This time, I am trying to make Chinese style meatballs instead of hamburger steak.

The ingredients are almost the same but the taste may be different for the sauce is different.
Coiled in sweet red bean paste, the meat crumbles in your mouth.
And it is better since it is bite-size.

“This… this is really delicious and tender. As expected of Master.”
“It tastes different even though it was made the same way as last time. This is really delicious.”
“Amazing, desu.”
“This food is incredibly tasty.”

Looks like it is popular with the four of them.
None of them will think of minced meat as humble food anymore.

Next day. I went to the merchants’ guild to get the monster card after eating breakfast.
I asked Roxanne and others to do laundry and cleaning and, as usual, went there alone.
I call for Luke and go to the meeting room to buy the Coral Monster Card.

“I was thinking of using this one with a Kobold Monster Card. Can you bid for one?”

While receiving the card, I place another order.

“But you bought a Kobold Monster Card only recently.”
“It is convenient to have a spare.”

Currently, I still have one Kobold Monster Card remaining.
Therefore, I will have the fusion done immediately upon returning home.
If I have a spare, I won’t have to wait to fuse a card until he successfully bids for a Kobold Monster Card.
That’s great.

I wonder if I should ask him to obtain a batch next time.
This way, I can use a dropped monster card immediately.

“It will be convenient, surely.”
“I think you can order as many as you want as spare because the party that

used to order it has now disappeared. Kobold Monster Card will become slightly cheaper, too."

They were ordering quite a lot of Kobold Monster Cards in order to make a weapon with MP Absorption skill.
Because I delivered them the one made by Sherry, they shouldn't need to place any more orders.

"The figure of 4,000 Nars appeared in the auction the other day after a long absence. If you're willing to wait, since it is a spare, I can aim for a successful bid of 4,800 to 4,900 Nars, I think."
"It is fine for the first card to be around 5,000 Nars. For the bid on the second one, however, try to lower the price."
"Very well."

Has it gone down a bit, after all?
It'll be a bad decision if I don't buy it.
If the successful bid is in this range, it'll be great.

"I need a Goat Monster Card as well."

I order a Goat Monster Card, too.
We need to move up the floors in order to increase our levels, but if we move to higher floors, the battles will become harder. The quickest way to solve this problem is by enhancing our weapons.
Since I already have a Sacred Spear, it will be good to attach 2x Intelligence skill.

"Will you be using it on the Sacred Spear?"
"Nope, it is for something else. Because of circumstances, I can't tell you more than that. I am in need of just one."
"Is that so?"

Luke knows I am carrying a Sacred Spear.
I mean, he was present during the trade.
Like Luke said, by fusing a Goat Monster Card with the Sacred Spear, I can double its power, but I can't disclose this fact without having to buy more than one cards.
In reality, it is not necessary for me to buy a lot since I only need one card.

There won't be any problem if I happen to succeed from time to time, but if I always buy one card, it will raise suspicion.
I can use the excuse 'I somehow succeeded' from time to time, but this time, I'll use 'it is for something else' excuse.
It is really not necessary to tell him a reason. If I can just avoid the question, it'll be good enough.

"If Goat Monster Card appears within 5,500 Nars, bid on it, please."
"Understood. At this price, I think I will have a successful bid soon."

Earlier, I bought a Goat Monster Card at 5,400 Nars.
If I continued to bid when it was 5,400 Nars, I would already have another one by now.

No use living in the past.
It is still cheap, with only 100 Nars difference.
After placing order for a Goat Monster Card with Luke, I leave the merchants' guild.

Chapter 134 - Petrifaction

“In the future, I intend to have Miria equip a weapon with Inflict Petrifaction skill attached. However, should I attach the skill to Miria’s rapier or the estoc?”

When we return home, I talk it over with everyone.
It’s better to include everyone in the loop.
In the future, Miria will likely inherit Roxanne’s estoc.

“It’s a popular belief that a dragon knight best wield two weapons capable of inflicting abnormal status. I, however, don’t believe that.”

Sherry voices her opinion.

“Really?”
“When I say a weapon capable of inflicting abnormal status, it alludes that there’s no surety it will inflict abnormal status. However, with two weapons, the likelihood will be higher.”
“Is that so?”

Vesta doesn’t seem to be aware of it either.

“Is that due to Dragon Knight’s Dual Wielding skill? If you use two swords, will the effect be double?”
“No, I don’t understand it fully either. There’s no report suggesting that if you use two swords, the effect will be double.”

So it’s no good?
Or will it be effective?
Even though it is called Dual Wielding, it doesn’t mean that you strike both the swords at the same time.
Since the effects of the skills don’t take place at the same time, there’s no meaning.

Let's assume that Inflict Petrifaction skill has 50% chance of inflicting petrifaction. If a dragon knight were to wield two weapons with Inflict Petrifaction skill attached, the total chance would be 100%.
However, it doesn't seem to be possible.
If the effects could stack, I would attach two skills on the same weapon.

Is that why she said that she doesn't believe it?
Sherry doesn't seem to believe it.
So, is it merely a myth, after all?

If you had Dual Wielding skill and wielded two swords capable of inflicting petrifaction, you would indeed be strong.
Somehow.
Well, not just 'somehow'.

"It seems to be no good."
"With Dual Wielding skill, albeit difficult, it is possible to attack the monster from the side and the back at the same time. If you take 'total' (overall) battle into account, the probability of inflicting abnormal status will indeed be higher. For example, if you use a sword capable of inflicting petrifaction and a sword capable of inflicting poison at the same time." (TN: 'Total' was used by the author but it doesn't go well with translation)

Well, if I were to attach both the skills capable of inflicting petrifaction and inflicting poison to the same weapon, wouldn't it be the same?
Everyone knows that, surely.
However, it's rare to attach multiple skills to the same weapon.

Therefore, she seems be discussing it based on the assumption of one skill per weapon.
In that case, dragon knights, who can wield two weapons, hold the advantage, certainly.

"But that's only if you attach one skill to one sword."
"Not at all. Ah, that…"

Sherry seems to be lost for words.
I must remind her that we can attach two skills to the same weapon.
If you attach multiple skills to the same weapon, the advantage of the dragon knights won't be as clear.
Using multiple skills with one attack is possible.

I'm not sure yet whether or not attaching the same skill more than once to the same weapon works but I'm sure that attaching different skills to the same weapon does work.
Both HP Absorption and MP Absorption skills of Durandal work.

"So making a weapon with Inflict Petrifaction skill for Miria seems to be better, after all."
"Yes, desu."

Miria seems to be enthusiastic.
But that's her usual reply.

If there's a weapon capable of inflicting abnormal status, the skill of Assassin which increases the chance of inflicting abnormal status will be effective.
Should I make someone other than Miria the assassin?
Assassin has another skill which increases the resistance against abnormal status. However, whether the job will be of use to Roxanne, who dodges everything, or not is hard to say.
If I were to make Vesta an assassin, the Dual Wielding skill of Dragon Knight would be unusable.

"Well, I don't understand it fully. However, if you want to attach Inflict Petrifaction skill to a weapon, I would suggested estoc. The higher the tier of the weapon the skill is attached to, the better."

Roxanne shares her opinion while holding out her estoc.
If Miria uses estoc, Roxanne will have to use rapier, which will be a step back.

"That's bad."
"That's not a problem."

When it comes to equipment, Roxanne doesn't seem to be as concerned.
But she's especially particular when it comes to order.
She seems to take what's better for the whole party into account.
That's good.

As a reward, I will soon have to buy her a weapon better than estoc.
To find another estoc may not be possible.

Therefore, it is best to attach the best skill you have to the best equipment you have.

I pass the estoc, which I received from Roxanne, to Sherry.
I take out the Coral Monster Card, which I bought just now, and the Kobold Monster Card which I already had at hand.
I hand the cards to Sherry.

“Because a Kobold Monster Card enhances the effect of a skill, it is better to use it with a better weapon.”

Sherry agrees with my idea, it seems.
She seems to have consented to attaching multiple skills to a one-handed sword instead of a two-handed sword.
I’m grateful.

“Umm, may I see the fusion?”

When I pass the sword and the monster cards to Sherry, Vesta hesitatingly asks.

“Are you fine with it?”
“Yes.”
“Okay then.”

I allow Vesta after confirming it with Sherry.
Even if she hadn’t asked, it’s not like I would have driven her away.
It has been the case until now.

“Well, I’ll be fusing it then.”

Sherry invokes Monster Card Fusion.
Sherry’s hands start glowing.

Estoc of Petrifaction | One-handed Sword
Skills | Annex Petrifaction | Empty | Empty | Empty

With the light having subsided, the fusion is over.
So it’s called Estoc of Petrifaction, huh?

As for the skill, it's not Inflict Petrifaction but Annex Petrifaction.
It's probably because of the Kobold Monster Card.

"Ooh, as expected of Sherry. It's a success."
"It's a success?"
"Yeah."

I show the Estoc of Petrifaction to Vesta.

"It's amazing."
"It's Sherry who's amazing."

Roxanne compliments Sherry.
Sherry has a somewhat subtle expression about her face.
Because she knows that it was I who chose an equipment, which was bound to succeed, for fusion.

"Well then, Roxanne will be using this sword for a while. For now, Miria will only be observing."
"Are you sure?"
"Okay, desu."

I pass the Estoc of Petrifaction to Roxanne.
To acquire Assassin, you have to first be a Warrior Lv30.
Because I'll be uneasy in having a Warrior Lv1 fight monsters, I ask her to observe for the time being.

From inside home, I warp us to Haruba's 20th floor.
I switch Miria's job from Diver Lv33 to Warrior Lv1.

"Sherry, swap places with Miria."
"Understood."
"Okay, desu."
"Is there a meaning in having her observe from behind?"

Sherry is sharp.
The reason as to why I'm having Miria observe for now is because I have switched her job to Warrior Lv1.
If I didn't change her job, Roxanne would be fighting with the rapier.

“It’s important to observe the battles from behind every now and then.
Miria, can you use spear?”
“Use, desu.”

After successfully deceiving her, I hand the Sacred Spear to Miria.

“Well, you could say that.”

Sherry nods vaguely and exchanges hats with Miria.
When Miria becomes an assassin, the effect of Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat will increase, too.
After I forcibly end this topic, we kick the exploration off.

Annex Petrifaction skill took unexpectedly long to succeed.
It’s the fourth group we have encountered. The monster has been petrified.
The Hat Bat that received Roxanne’s attack falls onto the ground.

“Fell, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria shout at the same time.
Miria seems to be observing Roxanne’s fighting style well.
I doubt she can use it as a reference.

The hat bat is lying on the ground, still.
It does seem to have been petrified.

“What happens when you get petrified?”
“You become as hard as stone. Consequently, you become resistant to physical attacks. However, you become vulnerable to magic attacks.”

While listening to Sherry, I swap places with Roxanne and send her in the back.
So, even if it has been petrified, it has to be finished off?
Inflict Petrifaction skill won’t be as effective for a party with no wizard.

I cast Firestorm.
As expected, the flames engulf the hat bat lying on the ground unmoved.
Although it has to be finished off even if it has been petrified, for it to receive an attack like that is convenient.
This skill is indeed great.

However, when it comes to the chance of inflicting petrifaction, it's not that great.
Roxanne has attacked a dozen of times.
The 'percent' (probability) is low, I can say. (TN: 'Percent' was used by the author but it doesn't go well with translation)
About same as Vesta's critical strike.

I burn two Rub Shrubs to smoke.
Thereafter, I finish the still hat bat with a Breezeball.
Although it dodges attacks a lot, because it was unable to move, the attack was bull's eye.

"So it becomes like this when it gets petrified."
"Unlike paralysis, it can't recover naturally if it's petrified."
"White, desu."
"Really?"

Everyone watches the hat bat curiously as I poke it with the spear.
When it gets petrified, does it turn white?
I don't get it.

"Roxanne, you wanna try once more?"

After I dispose off the hat bat, I ask Roxanne.

"Not at all, it's enough for me. Thank you very much."
"You wanna try, Sherry?"
"I'm not used to one-handed swords."

Sherry doesn't seem to be interested either.
I thought she was interested since she seemed curious but it doesn't seem to be so.

"Well then, Roxanne. The chance of inflicting petrifaction doesn't seem to be high. It's for the sake of confirmation."
"Umm, is it an experiment?"
"Correct."
"Understood."

It's not really for the sake of confirmation.
I can confirm the probability with the warrior Miria, too.
However, she's only Warrior Lv3 at the moment.
So I want you to keep at it for a while.

There's another option. I can switch Roxanne's job to Assassin but I won't.
Because her Assassin job is only Lv1, it'll be risky.
Since job effects are shared by all party members, I can't afford to drop levels of more than one members.
And Vesta's Dragon Knight job is still at Lv24.

I leave the Estoc of Petrifaction with Roxanne and carry on hunting.
As for the second monster to get petrified, it was once again a Hat Bat.
Because Hat Bat's movement is erratic, due to which Roxanne engages it, is that the reason?
The petrified Hat Bat drops down.

A lone Rub Shrub remains.
I switch to Firestorm.
Roxanne and Vesta surround the rub shrub.
Sherry and Miria thrust their spears from a distance.

Earlier, I was using Breezestorm to get rid of the Hat Bat for it's more difficult to handle owing to its movement.
Because it's a troublesome monster, Roxanne was keeping it company.
Because it's a troublesome monster, I was using the magic it's weak against.
Now that it's down, there's no need.
Roxanne's and the Estoc of Petrifaction's compatibility doesn't seem to be high.
When I was making the decision, I didn't think it that far. I'm glad that I decided to have it made for Miria in the end.

I take a step back and cast another spell.
Although I had switched to fire spells, the Hat Bat turned into smoke nevertheless.
Proving that it becomes vulnerable to magic attacks when it gets petrified.
I finish the remaining Rub Shrub with a Fireball.

"In case of a weapon capable of inflicting abnormal status, choosing the enemies is difficult."

As you would expect from Sherry. She has identified the demerit of the Estoc of Petrifaction.
But can it really be called a demerit?
It's more a matter of luxury.

"It would be more effective if a dragon knight were to dual wield. I agree now."
"I see. It may indeed be true."
"Is that really so?"

Vesta still doesn't seem to get it.
Because it's necessary, I'll have to explain it.

"For example, we encounter a group of two Rub Shrubs and one Hat Bat. I will use fire spells, it being the weakness of the Rub Shrubs. Ideally, in this case, I would like to petrify the Hat Bat because even if I petrified a Rub Shrub, I would still use the same number of fire spells. If I petrify the Hat Bat, however, it will make it considerably easier. Do you get it?"
"Yes."

The next petrifaction didn't take too long.
Roxanne still had to attack over 20 times, though.
The chance of inflicting petrifaction really is low.

You could consider successful petrifaction a godsend.
So, as you would expect, successive petrifaction is impossible.
First, you can only target one of the monsters from a group.
Even then, it's not a surety that they'll get petrified.

If you aim for more monsters, it'll only slow the process down.
After I make sure that Roxanne has translated it all to Miria, we proceed.

"If we come across a group of two Hat Bats and one Rub Shrub, since Hat Bats need to be taken out first, which one would you like me to petrify?"
"Rub Shrub."
"Okay, I'll petrify Rub Shrub then. In other words, if there are two swords capable of inflicting abnormal status, two people of ordinary jobs will be required to use the swords. However, if there is a dragon knight, they will be able to use both the swords alone. If two people were to attack the same target, it would be a distributed attack. However, if a dragon knight were to attack alone, it would be a concentrated attack, hence easier for them to

petrify the target."
"Ah, I see. That is indeed so."

To give a dragon knight two swords capable to inflicting abnormal status is the most optimum solution then?
Assassin job seems to be rare.

"Still, I'll stick to my decision of having Miria use it. Miria can choose the monster herself. However, it will also depend on the formation of the vanguards. Therefore, to choose a monster will not always be possible."
"I see. Understood."
"Do, desu."
"I think it'll be alright."

Issuing instructions every time is bothersome. Leaving it all to them is much easier.
Experiencing life and death situations inside the labyrinth will surely help Miria learn quickly.
That fish isn't everything.

Chapter 135 - Gambler

“Well then, let’s have Miria use the sword.”

Roxanne and Miria exchange their swords.
I receive the Sacred Spear from Miria.
Miria has leveled up twice and is now Warrior Lv5.
Her being a Lv5 is still a cause of concern but it’s alright for there’s Plating.

After resetting the formation, we continue with the exploration.
Miria is persevering in the front.
It seems to be alright, doesn’t it?
Well, the problem will be when she receives attacks.

“Did it, desu.”

Right after Miria’s words, a Fly Trap appears.
Annex Petrifaction seems to have been successfully invoked.
The Fly Trap has stopped moving.
It appears to have turned lime.

As expected, it’s rare for petrifaction to be successful.
Miria had launched over a dozen attacks before she succeeded for the first time.
It’s so rare that you almost forget it, really.

We leave the petrified Fly Trap aside and attack the Hat Bats.
I take on one of the two Hat Bats which Roxanne was playing with.
When it drop down from four monsters to three, it becomes easier for the vanguards.

I take out both the Hat Bats with a Breezestorm.
Roxanne and Miria surround the Rub Shrub which Vesta was keeping company.
I switch to fire spells and cast Firestorm.
Sparks engulf both the Rub Shrub and the Fly Trap.

The Fly Trap turns into smoke.
The Fly Trap died before the Rub Shrub.
It didn't collapse; it turned into smoke while standing.
Is this the way the petrified monsters die?

It would be dangerous if they were to fall in petrified form.
If I were to die after getting hit by a falling monster which had been petrified, it would be unsightly.
I didn't think about it earlier when the Hat Bat fell after it had been petrified.
I better instruct them not to petrify the aerial monsters.

I finish the remaining Rub Shrub off with a Fireball.
Because both the Fly Trap and the Rub Shrub are weak against fire magic, they would normally have died at the same time.
The Fly Trap died earlier than the Rub Shrub because it was petrified, most likely.
The petrified monsters do seem to become vulnerable to magic attacks.

"Good. Miria seems to be able to inflict petrifaction, too. Great."
"Yes, desu."

After I praise her, we carry on the exploration.
It wasn't until she was Warrior Lv8 that Miria came under attack.
The Hat Bat eludes her shield and crashes into Miria.

"Are you okay?"
"Okay, desu."

Such an answer returns to me while I was healing her.
Is she really okay?
While casting Heal, I take two Rub Shrubs out with a Firestorm.

Now that the remaining monster is one, Miria swaps places with Roxanne to confront the Hat Bat and raises her hand.
This much healing seems to be enough.
I attack the bat with a Breezeball.
Miria drifts to the side and slashes at it with her Estoc of Petrifaction.

I finish the Hat Bat off with another wind spell.
Thus far, if nasty Hat Bats were to appear, Roxanne would alone engage

them in the front.
Now that she has a sword with Annex Petrifaction skill, Miria will have to confront them henceforth.
Miria's workload has now increased.

Because petrifaction hardly succeeds, I wonder if we should do it like we used to.
Should we really have to do it differently?
Although Hat Bat flies briskly and is therefore troublesome, Rub Shrub isn't easy to beat either.
If three Hat Bats were to appear, she would have to take on one anyway, she wouldn't say that she can't fight against a Hat Bat.

"It will get more difficult, so I'll be relying on you."
"Yes, desu."

After a few words of encouragement, we proceed.
After she levels up to Warrior Lv10 without receiving any attack, I remove Alchemist.
We can't have Plating on forever and it's not like we will be receiving attacks on purpose.
Now that she's a Lv10, it's a good opportunity.

We safely reach the noon break without Miria receiving another attack.
Thief, which I selected in place of Alchemist, has reached Lv30.
I check my jobs out.

Explorer Lv44, Hero Lv40, Wizard Lv42, Monk Lv42, Thief Lv30, Alchemist Lv34, Bounty Hunter Lv32, Cook 35, Herbalist Lv6, Sex Maniac Lv24, Warrior Lv30, Village Chief Lv1, Merchant Lv27, Swordsman Lv2, Weapons Merchant Lv1, Armor Merchant Lv1, Villager Lv6, Farmer Lv1, Knight Lv1, Assassin Lv1, Gambler Lv1

Ooh
It's there.
Gambler, that is.

Like I thought, it requires Thief Lv30.
The scribbling Sherry saw seems to be credible.

Cook needs Explorer Lv30; Knight needs Warrior Lv30.
There may be more jobs which need other jobs to be at Lv30.
And you can acquire those jobs if your other jobs reach Lv30.
Is there a derivative for my racial job, Sex Maniac, too, or not?

Gamber Lv1
Effects | Small Increase in Intelligence | Small Increase in Dexterity
Skills | Abnormal Status Resistance Down | Critical Outbreak

Gambler gives two small increments as job effects.
I disagree, however, with the fact that Gambler increases Dexterity.
Even if a gambler is skillful, in the end, they are simply con.

As for the skills, there's nothing related to scam. One of the skills increases the probability of inflicting abnormal status while the other increases the chance of critical strike.
A job which requires you to roll the dice at every attack, huh?
If you look at it that way, it does suit a gambler.

Abnormal Status Resistance Down seems to be an active skill.
When you invoke the skill, it requires you to select the target whose abnormal status resistance you want decreased.
It's not a passive skill which reduces your abnormal status resistance. I'm glad.

I'm glad that it doesn't reduce your abnormal status resistance but is rather an offensive skill.
It does suit a gambler.
'If you want meat, cut the bone first.' It's the same thing.

Ah, I wonder how it works.
I can try to reduce my abnormal status resistance for a while.
But there's no need for me to do that.

As it appears, Gambler is a job which drops resistance of the monsters to abnormal status and furthermore, increases the rate of your critical strikes.
It's a constitution of skills which a gambler would surely like.
Because they bet on all-or-nothing.

I try Gambler out when we move back to the labyrinth in the afternoon.
To start off, I cast Abnormal Status Resistance Down on the monster which

Miria is confronting.
Gambler's compatibility with Assassin is good.

The monster is still not petrified even after two attacks.
Miria has yet to become an assassin.

Because the probability of inflicting petrifaction is low to begin with, is that why it can't be helped?
Or does it have to be my attack for Abnormal Status Resistance Down to work?
Do I have to do it myself, after all?
There's a possibility that the extent to which it reduces the resistance depends on the job level.

Because I can feel that my MP is low, I can't afford to attack wastefully.
Should I make the next test last?
When we further the exploration, we encounter a group of two Hat Bats and a Fly Trap.
After I cast Breezestorm, Miria attacks the Fly Trap which I had already used Abnormal Status Resistance Down on.

The Fly Trap is still not petrified.
While ruing how useless it is, I take out two Hat Bats in eight Breezestorms.

Huh?
It was same as before.
On 20th floor, it should take nine spells of the attribute which they are weak against.

I was of the idea that I might have counted wrong but I finish the Fly Trap off in five Fireballs.
There's no mistake.

"The number of spells it took to finish off the Fly Trap is no more than previous floor."

I approach Sherry. She will have an answer, certainly.

"Not just that, it took less number of spells to kill the Hat Bats."
"Really?"

I seem to have counted the spells cast on the Hat Bats wrong.
I thought that I counted properly; I guess not.
So it was like that.

What might have been the reason?
Was it the effect of Abnormal Status Resistance Down? That's not possible.
I cast it on the Fly Trap but it worked on the Hat Bats? That's not funny.
Even if it had been the case, it would have worked on one, not both.

Even if I counted it wrong in case of the Hat Bats, what about the Fly Trap?
How did the number of spells it took to kill the Fly Trap decrease when it wasn't even petrified?
It's hard to imagine that magic resistance has anything to do with abnormal status resistance.
And I don't have any such skill.

Does Abnormal Status Resistance Down inflicts random abnormal status?
I wonder how.
Resistance Down skill seems to be good.

Apart from that, it might have been due to Critical Outbreak.
If one of the wind spells was critical, it might have dealt huge damage for it being a weakness of the Hat Bats but it shouldn't have been so in case of the Fly Trap.
It seems it was the case, though.
I wonder if magic attacks can be critical, too.
Nope, neither Dragon Knight nor Gambler have any spells.
I wonder if the passive skill, Critical Outbreak, increases the probability of critical strikes for the user regardless of the type of attack.
It seems to not be limited to physical attacks.

"This kind of things may happen from time to time. Don't drop your guard until the monster collapses."

There's no surety yet that a magic attack can be critical.
I tell everyone, not just Sherry.
If I keep talking to Sherry, I'm afraid that others may feel left out.

"To be able to do even such a thing, as expected of Master."
"I can't control it well."

Once or probably twice.
It'll probably be alright.

"Not at all. As you would expect."
"Amazing, desu."
"Is that so?"

Miria and Vesta have already been swindled by Roxanne.
Even if a magic attack were critical, it wouldn't be noticeable for there doesn't tend to be any identification, really.
This skill is everything but convenient.

I stop using Abnormal Status Resistance Down and observe.
There's no sign for a critical attack to have taken place.

Petrifaction did take place, however.
The moment I stopped using Abnormal Status Resistance Down, petrifaction was inflicted.
Is it really just low probability?

Vesta, too, seemed to hit a number of critical strikes.
I wonder if the rate of my critical strikes is less than Vesta's.
Nah, the damage must not equate to one magic attack unless there are at least two critical attacks, I think.
For the number of spells to decrease noticeably, its effect has to be considerable.

Having encountered who knows how many groups, I burn the Rub Shrubs to smoke in eight Firestorms.
This time, it was a group of two Rub Shrubs.

"This time around, it took less number of spells than usual."

Sherry was counting diligently, it seems.
Even though she was not counting earlier.
It's her skeptical nature.

"Is that so? As expected of Master."

'Learn from Roxanne' — is what I want to say to her.

“Un, the effect is not that big. Let’s do an experiment.”
“Experiment?”
“I don’t use it always; it will highlight the effect.”

I tell Sherry who seems to have become alert at the mention of ‘experiment’.
It’s difficult to explain the contents of this experiment to her.

It has happened two times already. If it happens once more, it will be valid to say that magic attacks can be critical.
‘What happens twice will happen thrice.’
And there’s a method to verify it.

At once, I pull Durandal out and restore my MP… By the way, Miria has successfully inflicted petrifaction.

“Did it, desu.”

When I take a glance, I find a Fly Trap hardened.

“Umm, isn’t it good?”
“Of course it is. Because it decreases the difficulty, it’s welcome. As expected, Miria.”
“Yes, desu.”

After I take out rest of the monsters, I answer Roxanne’s doubts and praise Miria.
For petrifaction increases physical defense, it’ll be difficult for me if I use Durandal.

Therefore, I’ll have to finish it off with magic attacks after taking out the rest.
Nope, there’s a way to finish it off with Durandal.
I hammer a Rush into the petrified Fly Trap.

By the way, There was no Critical Outbreak ever since I pulled Durandal out.
Because I had removed Gambler in favor of Warrior.
I replaced the job because there were a few things I was feeling unsatisfied about.
It’s merely a matter of luxury.

The Fly Trap turned into smoke after a number of Rush's.
There seems to be no change compared to when it's not petrified.

"Amazing. As expected of Master."
"Physical attacks should not have worked on petrified monsters. It really was amazing."
"As expected, desu."
"It went down so easily. Amazing."

Like I thought.
Even if defense of the monsters, which have been inflicted with petrifaction, increases; the skill of Durandal, Ignore Defense, invalidates it.
In other words, it's all thanks to this sword.

I recover my MP and send Durandal back.
I allocate the bonus points freed up from removing Durandal to Increase in Critical Rate.
I increase Critical Rate to 30%.
With this, I can immediately ascertain if magic attacks can be critical or not.

I wait for next monster while proceeding with the exploration.
We encounter a group of one Hat Bat, one Rub Shrub and one Fly Trap.
I start off with a Firestorm.
The Rub Shrub and the Fly Trap turn into ashes in seven spells.

It's the effect of Increase in Critical Rate, surely.
It's an amazing effect. I'm fired up like I have never been before.
Critical… Outbreak certainly, solidly applies to magic attacks.

I was doubtful whether magic attacks can be critical or not.
The Hat Bat collapses in three Breezeballs.
My wind spells might have been critical, too.

With Increase in Critical Rate set at 30%, every one attack out of three turns out critical.
If I cast ten spells, a few of them will be critical.
As per rough estimate.

"What can I say now? Truly splendid. As expected of Master."
"It was absolutely amazing."

“As expected, desu.”
“That really was incredible.”

Sherry praises, finally.
But that’s expected for the result was amazing, indeed.

“Now that I have verified it, the experiment is over. I’ll undo it now. It’ll not be like this every time.”

Because I need to increase Gained Experience, I can not allocate points toward Increase in Critical Rate.
It’s a pity.

Chapter 136 - Moderate

Increase in Critical Rate, it is more useful that I thought.
It is a big advantage when magic spells turn out critical.
If I increase it to 30%, it should turn out at least once every battle.
The duration of the battles will shorten with that.

But there is a problem.
Increase in Critical Rate is a bonus skill. It requires me to use bonus points.
Whether I can use it or not depends on finding a good balance between using it with Increase in Gained Experience, Multiple Jobs or Durandal.
I guess it will be absolutely impossible to have 30% Increase in Critical Rate skill on all the time.

Additionally, since Critical Outbreak hardly ever invokes in first place, using Increase in Critical Rate is useless. Instead, I should invest on Gambler's skill set.
It is quite a chore to use Gambler in addition to Explorer, Hero, Wizard, and Monk.
Honestly, I wanted to use Fourth Job and have Required Experience set at 1/20th.
Do I have to compromise on Required Experience 1/20th?

Or maybe I should remove Hero?
It would be illogical if I reduced base offensive abilities by removing Hero in order to increase Critical Rate.
Because job effects are shared by all the party members, the highly effective Hero is hard to take off.

Should I remove Explorer then?
In case of Intelligence Card verification, I can change my job to Monk. When I am not using Item Box, Explorer is only useful for Intelligence Card Verification.
As for Item Box and Party Formation, I can leave Explorer to either Roxanne or Sherry.

Since the size of Item Box is level dependent, it will be troublesome until it reaches a usable size.

I don't need to go that far, do I?
For the bonus points will decrease a bit if I remove Explorer.
If I forcibly use Required Experience 1/20th along with Fourth Job (after removing Explorer), I will not have enough bonus points to allocate toward Increase in Critical Rate.
And it will not make a big difference using Gambler without using Increase in Critical Rate.

For the chance of Critical Outbreak is really small.
Apparently, Vesta is not hitting critical strikes as much with Dragon Knight, so it will likely be the same for Gambler.

Wouldn't it be better to select Sixth Job instead and make Explorer, Hero, Wizard, Monk and Gambler a base set?
With this, I can also select Alchemist or Cook depending on the situation.
If I use Durandal, I can hit critical strikes by using Warrior and Gambler at the same time.

Nope, I think I should use Swordsman instead of Warrior.
Warrior's [Rush] and Swordsman's [Slash] are roughly the same skills.
Because [Slash] is Swordsman's skill, it is exclusive to sword, and I will only be using Durandal as weapon.
When I use Warrior, I bring out Durandal. Due to that, I reduce Gained Experience, so the conditions to level Warrior up will not be ideal.
It is better to level Swordsman up to Lv30 for the derivative job.
With Sixth Job, I can work on other jobs.

I open Character Reset interface in order to select Sixth Job.
Gambler will stay as Fifth Job. I will use Swordsman as Sixth Job.
I should train Swordsman quickly as it will be the job I will depend on when using Durandal.
As for Increase in Critical Rate, I will remove 30% Increase in Critical Rate and will only use (basic) Increase in Critical Rate.

Because Increase in Critical Rate uses bonus points, I can't have it on all the time.
I can't be too greedy for when I remove it later, the difficulty level of the battles will go up.

And there is a possibility that Sherry will question the difference in the frequency of its occurrence.
Since Critical Outbreak depends largely on the element of luck, I don't think I should rely on it too much.

If I increase Critical Rate, it becomes 10%. If I increase it further, it becomes 15%. It means that (basic) Increase in Critical Rate is 5%.
Neither big nor small.
I can manage it, somehow, since each increment requires just 1 point. It will be good to try this out.

Let's try Increase in Critical Rate first.
During the exploration, I took out the groups of monsters we encountered.

The number of spells it took to finish off the monsters was sometimes less, sometimes same.
Once every twenty since it is 5%, huh?
I wonder if it is like this.

It is simple.
Although simple, it is useful.
Since the duration of battles has shortened, I am grateful.
I am grateful for it being simple.

Because the number of spells it takes decreases by no more than one, I can't notice unless I count.
It is not to the extent where you can feel the difference.
On the other hand, if the effect were to the extent that it could be felt, I would be in trouble if it didn't invoke.
This also worries me.

It feels just about right.
Moderate. Just moderate.
Neither overkill nor non-existent.
Moderate can sometimes be best.

I bring out Durandal since I have expended plenty of my MP.
Since I have reached the point where I am using six jobs, the interval between having to use Durandal has become shorter.
MP Recovery Rate 3x, which I had been using, was quietly effective.
I can't keep insisting on this or that. It can't be helped.

I will fight the Hat Bat, that appeared, with [Slash].
While watching the monster's movement, I set my sights on the place to be cut, and invoke [Slash].
While the bat, that was thrown into the air, was trying to regain its posture, I take a hack with a second [Slash].

Basically, there is not much difference between [Rush] and [Slash] when using sword.
I will be able to fight as I am used to.
I avoid the charge of the next Hat bat, and hit it with a [Slash] while it was trying to recover.

Ooh, this one was a critical.
Durandal knocked the bat up powerfully into the air.
The Hat Bat is trembling greatly.

Apparently, even [Slash] can turn out critical.
Even magic can, too.
As for Critical Outbreak, it is like rolling a dice for it to invoke with any and every attack I can use.

"Did it, desu."

Miria exclaims in a low voice.
The Hat Bat, that Miria was keeping company, falls to the ground.
It wasn't related to my Critical Outbreak. Rather, it seems she managed to successfully inflict petrifaction.

Roxanne is confronting a Rub Shrub while Miria and Vesta are taking on a Hat Bat each, so no one noticed my critical hit.
Even Sherry. Ever since I brought Durandal out, and the fact that she knows about it possessing Incantation Interruption skill, she didn't feel the need to keep watch over me.
I shift my focus back to the Hat Bat, and strike [Slash] again while it was trying to regain its posture.
The monster fell to the ground and turned into smoke.

Next, I take on the Rub Shrub which Roxanne was keeping company.
It was an easy kill since I was attacking it from the side.
Finally, only the petrified Hat Bat remains.

“Ha, what do we do with this one?”

I must finish this Hat Bat off but it is tiny.
Furthermore, since it has fallen onto the ground, it is hard to cut.
Should I take it out with magic attack then?

“This one looks difficult.”

Roxanne, too, tilts her head, puzzled.
I hold Durandal in reverse grip, and thrust it in like you dig the earth with a stick.
I can feel my MP recovering.
Is it good enough?

“It seems to be working. It was thanks to Miria. As expected of Miria.”
“Yes, desu.”

Feeling relieved from seeing Miria smile, I invoke [Slash].
It was troublesome, so I attack it without using [Slash].
I hit the Hat Bat mechanically.
I feel like a worker on a construction site.

Oh, the blow right now went deep.
It was probably critical.
This time, everyone saw it but it doesn’t look like they noticed it.
How is that possible?

While attacking the petrified Hat Bat, I hit the ground several times.
It looks like I have finished it off.
The Hat Bat turns into smoke.

Thereafter, we continue to explore until the evening.
Because today is the day the apron will be ready, I finished the exploration early.
After receiving the apron from the Imperial Capital, I return home.
From today onward, Vesta will be wearing apron while helping with cooking.

“Vesta, can you make breadcrumbs?”
“Breadcrumbs?”

“You can ask someone how to make it.”
“Understood.”

I give instructions to Vesta who has put the apron on.
Her chest, covered by apron, looks soft and mellow.
The large bulge on the apron makes it even more alluring.
The intense impact softens, creating a soothing ambiance that of the Eden.

The fascinating softness and gentle suppleness are showing from her whole body.
However, because it is big, the frills look a little dull.
Moderate is the best.

As for the breadcrumbs, since Roxanne has given the nod, it seems to be okay.
After giving instructions, I head to the bathroom to prepare the bath.
Midway, when I went to recover my MP, the breadcrumbs were ready.
Vesta was helping with cutting vegetables.

“Thank you. Looks like it is done.”
“Yes, I will be done with this one as well.”

It seems she is useful in very many ways.

“Vesta, can you make boiled egg?”
“I would be able to, I think.”
“Then boil one until it hardens, please.”
“Understood.”

I ask more of Vesta.

“Roxanne, can you help me with the labyrinth as usual?”
“Yes.”

I move to the labyrinth with Roxanne.
When I finished recovering MP, Vesta was boiling the egg.

“Oh, you are doing great. After that, use this boiled water to scald the vegetables.”

She scalds the vegetables lightly, after which, I put the remainder in the bath.

“Master, the boiled egg.”

When I was done preparing the bath, the egg was boiled.

“Thank you. Then squeeze this fellow.”
“Okay.”

I have her squeeze a lemon.
I chop the scalded vegetables finely; mix it with mayonnaise, mashed boiled egg and lemon juice; sprinkle salt and pepper on it. Tartar sauce is ready.
I receive the frying pan from Miria who had already mixed breadcrumbs and a whole fish. I add tartar sauce to it.
I should have better made Miria cut the fish.

“Delicious, desu.”
“This is amazing. It is the first time I ate something like this.”

Miria likes it, unsurprisingly. Vesta seems to have favorable opinion, too.
I am glad.
Since fried food seems to go well, should I go with pork cutlet tomorrow?

After the meal, everyone enters the bathroom.
I first wash the four of them with soap.
Time-wise, it’s inefficient to wash the bodies of the four of them but I don’t feel like waiving my right.
Isn’t it my enjoyment once every ten days?

I shouldn’t confuse means with purpose.
I don’t wash their bodies to live, I live to wash their bodies.
I enjoy this moment of my life.
This moment is my life.

I took a plenty of time and cleaned their bodies thoroughly.
I have no shred of regret in my life.

After having my body washed by all of them, we enter the bath.
It gets slightly cramped when everyone enters, but there is no problem.

“Even though the temperature of hot water has gone down a bit, it is still good.”
“Yes, it is comfortable.”

Roxanne sticks close to me since the bath is cramped.
Touching her smooth skin while in hot water.
There is no problem.
No problem, at all.

“Miria, are you feeling comfortable, too?”
“Yes, desu.”

Miria, as usual, is floating near my feet.
Vesta soaks in hot water, lying close by.
Huh?
What is that thing floating?

I had a feeling that something was floating, but I shouldn’t care about it.
I am worried about Sherry across of me.
Moderate is the best.
The best is moderate.

I have them wear the aprons again after the bath.
This time, it’s the second, silk apron which I had tailored for them.
When Vesta wears it, the contrast looks similar to that between the top and the foot of a mountain.
The open range defense line tempts me in.

Th-This is a trap.
It is a trap to capture me, just like birdlime.
However, even if you know it is a trap, sometimes in life, you just know that you must go.

When is a good time to go?
Now is a good time to go.

I slide my hand in from the unprotected gap.
The apron is supposed to be used like this.
My hand is caught between the smooth, silky, satin, cloth and Vesta’s smooth, moist skin.

My fingers lightly catch soft balls of meat.
Soft and mellow.

I bury my fingers in without using any force.
Inside rich and soft matter.
Between love and luxury.

From between my fingers, flesh overflows.
While I was having pleasure from the soft feeling in my hands, it was oozing out of my fingers.
The flesh was gently overflowing from between my fingers.
Wonderful.

Earlier, I said moderate is the best. That was a lie.
Going to the edge is life.
Going to the edge is pleasure.

You don’t die twice or thrice, you die once.

(by Sei Shonagon)

Even though I discovered a truth of life, I went exploring normally the next day.
As for Increase in Critical Rate, I will probably stop after increasing it once.
If I have extra points, there are a variety of things I want to try out.

Chapter 137 - Stone Statue

Thanks to petrifaction and critical, the battles became easier.
Especially petrifaction. If it proc's, the battle is like half done.
Still, I must not drop my guard.

Having a few numbers to begin with and to have one suddenly lose the ability to fight.
It can heavily affect the battle.
Adding critical into the mix will be like an Ogre with an iron club.
Roxanne, Miria and the others are coordinating well. Once Miria takes care of her monster, she moves to help the others out.

However, petrifaction does not proc that much.
It is even less than the critical rate of my magic attacks after activating Increase in Critical Rate.
There is still some hope for when Miria reaches Warrior Lv30 and acquires Assassin.

Both of them depend on luck, that is the only problem.
When 5 monsters, which is the maximum number of monsters per group on this floor, appear; what will happen if neither petrifaction nor critical proc's?
While it may not be problem here on 20th floor, but if I depend on petrifaction or critical after 20th floor, I may be in a pinch if they don't proc.

With that thought, I remove 5% Increase in Critical Rate.
As it uses bonus points, it means Increase in Critical Rate can't be in use all the time.
I can afford to increase it further, but it will be better for the gap to be smaller when I remove it.

"Master, there is a message from Mr. Luke. He seems to have successfully acquired a Kobold Monster Card."
"Kobold? Would tomorrow do?"

Evening. When we return home after the exploration, there was a note from Luke.
For next enchantment, should I wait for Goat Monster Card?
The sooner his bid succeeds, the better.
It is not like battles are getting particularly harder, though.

Since I will not be able to use the Kobold Monster Card immediately, I will go get it tomorrow morning.
We start preparing dinner.
It's gonna be pork cutlet tonight.
I have Vesta cut the meat and make breadcrumbs.

"I have finished making breadcrumbs."
"Thank you. Things got easier thanks to Vesta's help. I am glad that Vesta came to our home."
"It is me who should be glad that I came here. What are you going to make?"

I had spare time since Vesta was helping me, so I decided to make crepe during that time.
I mix milk, wheat flour, sugar and eggs.
I didn't have any prior plan of making crepe, but I thought that something soft will be nice with the little milk we have left.

"It is a little test. Just stay there and watch."
"Okay."

I pour the mixture, it spreads out inside the frying pan.
I only made one since it was only a test.
I used the whole dough.
It flows on the frying pan like syrup.

Was it too diluted?
It would be better if milk were a little less.
Still, I can't say it is a failure yet.

Since the frying pan is well heated, it will harden soon.
I think the crepe made in the stalls had somewhat similar feeling.
It is probably good enough for something made the first time.
After a while, I fold it……

Ah, it is a failure, indeed.
When I tried to fold the crepe, it had burned inside the frying pan. It didn't come off well, it had crumpled.
Should I have been more careful?
Or should I have taken it out of the frying pan before folding it?

It is fine since today was just a test.
I cut the crepe into 5 pieces.
I put the first piece in my mouth.

Oh, it tastes just like crepe.
It looks like I managed to make a normal crepe.
Baking Isobe was impossible, but I was able to make crepe.
The softness, however, is probably not the same.

"It is something I made as a test. Each of you gets to eat one piece."

I offer it to the four of them.

"If it is something made by Master, I will enjoy it."

Roxanne takes a piece first.
It seems like the order is important.
Because I cut it roughly, however, the size seems different.
It is hard to cut it into 5 equal pieces.

"Because this one was a test, it will be the real deal next time."

It's troublesome, though, as I have raised a hurdle for me because of their anticipation.

"This is Amazing. As expected of Master."
"It's soft, sweet and delicious."
"Amazing, desu."
"It's delicious. I didn't know there was something in this world that could be so fluffy, so puffy and so delicious."

Sherry, Miria and Vesta take a piece in order and eat it.
All four of them seem to be rejoiced.

I probably made a normal crepe.
Vesta especially seemed to like it.

“You never ate something like this before, Vesta?”
“Yes. I never imagined a day would ever come when I could eat delicious food. Thank you very much for the food everyday. No matter how much appreciation and gratitude I have toward Master, it will not be enough.”

The stimulus apparently was too strong for Vesta.
But she still has some pork cutlet remaining.

Vesta was deeply impressed with the pork cutlet but it probably wasn’t at the same level as crepe.
She could have the same deep impression but I couldn’t feel it since it was the same.
I could have missed that feeling because she had the same level of gratitude for both.

I ask her to express her gratitude through actions.
Vesta has been active from the beginning, but lately, she has gradually become more sticky in addition to that.
It is a good tendency.

Next Morning. I go and receive the Kobold Monster Card.
Since it is a spare and it has no use for now, we enter the labyrinth.
Immediately after entering, we arrive at the boss room of Haruba’s 20th floor.
The exploration advanced smoothly.

Appearing before us is a Hat Bat and the boss, Pat Bat.
After smoke gathered, two monsters appeared.
I immediately rush to the small fry to get rid of it.

Vesta faces the Hat Bat from the front.
‘Why are you blocking my way?’ — is what I thought but I was the one who told her to do that during the boss battles.
I totally forgot about it.
I’m in a dilemma, though, whether I should be grateful or not.

Hat Bat flies around briskly, so it is difficult to hit it from the side when someone else is keeping it company from the front.

If both of us attacked it from the front, we would probably be able to finish it off quickly.
And because I have Durandal, I will recover the damage with HP Absorption.

Well, it can't be helped.
If I issued instructions after the monster came out, it would be too late.
Because I won't be attacked if I hit from the side, it will be easy.
So I mustn't complain.

The Hat Bat attacks Vesta.
The monster is switching between between left and right, eluding Vesta's swords.
I approach it, making a big detour from the side.

I somehow manage to reach the Hat Bat before it fixes its posture in the air, and unleash [Slash].
The monster attacks Vesta again, it eludes again and moves opposite of me to the left.

It was an unpleasant move.
I'm sure it was not intentional.
Or was that its natural movement, perhaps?

I chase it in a hurry, but I wasn't able to arrive in time to perform [Slash].
Next, I attack one step ahead. I strike the place, where Vesta warded it off to, with Durandal.
Oops
The sound was good this time. Maybe this one was critical?

I land another blow on the Hat Bat that was trying to regain its balance.
The monster attacks Vesta.
I hit the place, where Vesta repelled it to, with Durandal and unleash another [Slash].
The Hat Bat drops down.

Finally dead?
I was danced around by the Hat Bat. It wasted a lot of time.
Without taking a breather, I join in the encirclement of the boss.

As for the boss bat, Roxanne warded off all its attacks using her shield without moving around too much. She took care of it.
As expected of Roxanne.

“There was a big blow midway. As expected of Master.”

After knocking the boss down, Roxanne compliments me.

“Thank you.”
“As expected, desu.”
“Mine seems to be a characteristic of Dragon Knight job, but you are amazing, being able to do the same.”

And just like that, Roxanne coaxed everyone.
Actually, two critical strikes hit the Pat Bat.
Vesta, as well, landed a critical hit.
But why didn’t Miria manage to inflict petrifaction?

“Sherry, can abnormal status be inflicted to the boss?”
“There are some reports. The chance, however, is quite low.”
“Is that so?”

I ask the sole person who Roxanne didn’t manage to coax, Sherry, and the answer to the question satisfactorily returns to me.
Is it difficult for the boss to receive abnormal status?
It is to be expected since it is the boss, I guess.

Rather, isn’t it the situation where you are supposed to use Abnormal Status Resistance Down?
Currently, since I have Sixth Job selected, I’m using both Gambler and Swordsman simultaneously.
That’s why critical proc’d.
I will try it next time.

“The monster native to 21st floor is Rtoll troll.”

After Sherry briefs, we move to 21st floor.
Rtoll troll, huh?
That means Ma Bream will be on the next, 22nd, floor.

“Let’s explore 21st floor since it is still morning. After the noon break, we will move to Quratar’s labyrinth. After clearing 20th floor, we will go to 17th floor. Agreed, Miria?”
“Yes, desu.”

Even though Ma Bream has been pushed to the last, Miria doesn’t seem disappointed.
Probably because she knows we will be going there in any case.
What if we encounter problem in clearing 22nd floor?
Maybe I should not proceed to the next floor after 22nd floor.

Nah, should I stay on 22nd floor and hunt the boss until I get fatty tuna?
And Ma Bream will appear on 23rd floor, too.
That’s a clever cover up.
When I have enough to put on my table is the time when I break through to 23rd floor.

“We will go for two whole fish and have them for tomorrow’s dinner. I will leave the cooking to Miria.”
“Yes, desu.”

I motivate Miria and continue with exploring the labyrinth.
Motivation will not increase the chance of petrifaction, though, most likely.
While advancing at good pace, we come across a group of 3 Rtoll Trolls and 1 Rub Shrub.

I welcome them with a [Firestorm].
Rtoll Trolls are weak against fire magic like Fly Traps from 18th floor and Rub Shrubs from 19th floor.
I appreciate having Rtoll Trolls appear on 21st floor rather than getting sandwiched by Ma Breams.

After casting the spell, I wait for the monsters.
Rtoll Troll is relatively large, but the three of them along with a Rub Shrub are all lined up in front.
You can feel the intensity from their standing side by side like this.
When the vanguards hit them, they hit back.

Their punches are powerful.
Roxanne lightly dodges it, Miria avoids it, and Vesta parries it with her sword.

Roxanne skillfully maneuvers her upper body and dodges the attack of the Fly Trap next. (TN: I think the author is confused between Fly Trap and Rub Shrub)

During the exchange with Fly Trap, Miria was keeping the Rtoll Troll company.
Even though Fly Trap's poison attack is troublesome, Rtoll Troll's attack is intense.
I would appreciate it if any of them got petrified.

In the end, without anyone getting petrified, all four monsters were killed at the same time by a fire spell.
Since the number of spells I cast increased, I don't think critical proc'd.
But there is also a possibility that critical proc'd within that number.

The problem is how to accurately calculate the number of times critical proc's.
Should I start off by removing Gambler first?
Do I really need to go that far?
After all, there is a chance of inflicting petrifaction, too, without critical proc'ing.

And it is not like critical proc's that much anyway.
The duration of battle will extend by 10% at worst. It is not that bad if you think about it.

The next group we encounter comprises one Rtoll Troll and two Hat Bats.
I shower them with [Waterstorm].
It was easy for me to decide this time because they were two-to-one, but which one would I defeat first if they were one each?
Should it be Rtoll Troll first due to paralysis attack?

Vesta wards off the Hat Bat's charge.
Vesta is growing quickly. She has now gotten used to dealing with Hat Bats' attacks.
As I thought, dealing with Rtoll Troll should be priority.

The Rtoll Troll raises his arms.
This heavy blow seems to be especially heavy.
However, before he could smack his arms down, the Rtoll Troll's suddenly stops moving.

“Did it, desu.”

It seems to have been petrified.
With its arms up, it was petrified.

It looks kinda like a two-meter long stone statue.
Those raised arms look terrifying.
Like they will come crashing any moment.

Well, it was attacking after all.
If people were to see this sculpture, they would probably get terrified by it.
It looks more realistic than Laocoon.

The scene of a troll trying to attack Goliath.
The Troll of Samothrace.
The thinking old-man.
Isn’t it thinking too much?

Rather, it is closer to the work Unkei and Kaikei?
Vajra Troll Statue.
If it were the statue of Buddha, would it be called Troll’s Penance Statue?
And it won’t even get old with time.

After finishing the Hat Bats with a water spell, I clear the stone statue with a Fireball.
The Rtoll Troll turns into smoke right away.
Even after becoming stone, it’s weak against fire — pitiful.

Chapter 138 - Queen

It seems we can handle fighting on Haruba's 21st floor.
Though it's becoming a little harder every floor.
It will probably be a problem after all on the 23rd floor.

During the day we go to Quratar's 20th floor with the map.
Fire magic is the weakness of Rub Shrub and Rtoll Troll, so Quratar's 20th floor is quite easy.
We made it to the boss room without encountering many Ma Bream or Pig Hog.

It doesn't matter if we encounter Ma Bream or not.
We can visit the 17th floor afterwards, so there is no problem.
I don't think Miria will be upset.

I pull out Durandal as we wait in the waiting room.
There seems to be a party currently in there, so the boss door remains closed.

"It seems to be a bit busy."
"I think it's because of the medicine."

Sherry informs us.
This is the boss that drops the Wood Shavings?
It's a bad time for it too.
There seems to be a lot of people around in the early afternoon.

While we are waiting, another party enters the standby room.
We are supposed to be in the Labyrinths in the Harz Duchy, as requested by the Duke of Harz.
Meeting people isn't the best.
It's possible to make an excuse though.

When that time comes, let's blame the fish lover, Miria.
Because Miria wanted fish, and we have not reached the 22nd floor at

Haruba yet.
I'll do that.
It's not the right floor for us.

The combat from the previous party ended, and the boss door opened so we went inside.
The equipment lying around… there wasn't any.
The party hunting the boss for medicine must have had enough ability.

Smoke gathers in the center of the room.
Two demons appear.
The Rough Shrub boss, and Rtoll Troll.
Vesta blocks the front of the Rtoll Troll.

After using [Abnormal resistance decrease] on the Rough Shrub since Miria is fighting it, I attacked the Rtoll Troll.
When Vesta dodges an attack, I drive a [Slash] into that spot.
While Vesta is exchanging blows with the Rtoll Troll, I attack from the side with Durandal.

It's easier when there is a vanguard to block the front.
The instruction was useful this time.
I use [Slash] in rapid succession, and the Rtoll Troll is knocked down.

Vesta and I joined the encirclement of the Rough Shrub.
Even with [Abnormal resistance decrease], petrification doesn't seem to have happened.
Well, I didn't expect things to be that easy.

I brandish Durandal towards the boss.
Since Roxanne is handling the front of Rough Shrub easily, lets try not to get hit by attacks this time.
I need to watch the demons movements carefully.

A branch moves and attacks Roxanne.
Roxanne easily avoids it.
She pierced it with the rapier in the process.

Movements like that, they are impossible for me.
The branches flail wildly, and there is no chance.
It's hard enough to dodge, let alone consider attacking as well.

Do not get hit by an attack.
Watch the movement of the demon.
Oh.
The movement stopped.

“I did it, desu!”

Oh. It’s petrified?
Rough Shrub has become hard.
The colour has become a little white too.

“Oh. It’s as Sherry said. The boss does have a chance to petrify.”
“Yes, though it’s supposed to be considerably rare.”
“As expected, Miria is great.”
“Yes, desu.”

Did [Abnormal resistance decrease] help out?
However, I praise Miria.
It’s Miria that uses the Estoc of Petrifaction to fight.

I use Durandal on the petrified boss.
I slash it over and over.
It’s become petrified, so the possibility of it counter attacking is zero.

It reminds me of old times, of practicing kendo with continuous swings.
It’s the same as that.
It’s nostalgic.

The boss was killed by my continuous attacks.
There might have been some criticals, but it’s hard to tell with no changes.
Rough Shrub became smoke.

Even if you are a boss, you’re just a sand bag if you are petrified.
After making anti-paralysis medicine we continued on to the 21st floor.

“The demon on Quratar’s 21st floor is the kettle mermaid.”
“The kettle mermaid? Lets try fighting it once, and then we’ll go to the 17th floor. Roxanne, can you take us somewhere with Kettle Mermaids?”
“I understand. This way.”

We head out with Roxanne's guidance.
We've fought the Kettle Mermaid before, but this time we have criticals and petrification so I don't think we can judge strength from our previous experience.
One fight will do for now.

There's always the chance of some unexpected danger.
It isn't bad to try it once.
We fight it once, and then go to the 17th floor.
It's rather rare that something unexpected happens.

We hunt Ma Bream until we have two Whole Fish, and then we return to Haruba's labyrinth.
After returning to Haruba's labyrinth, I test the effects of [Abnormal resistance decrease].
The boss was petrified, so did [Abnormal resistance decrease] contribute to that?
I'll test it out using regular demons.

Another demon is petrified, but the chance still seems quite low.
The chance of petrification was already quite small, so I can't make an exact estimate.
Boss battles are quite long, and there may be no result even if [Abnormal resistance decrease] is used.
Is it easier to use Bounty Hunter's [Life and Death] with [Abnormal resistance decrease] active? That won't be solved by just thinking about it.

The experiment also uses a lot of MP, so I stop it after a while.
I will use [Abnormal resistance decrease] against bosses in the future.
We continued on exploring like normal until evening.
We left the labyrinth, and bought ingredients in Quratar.

"I'm planning on making something extra, so I'll leave dinner to everyone else today. Vesta can help me as well."
"Okay."

First, I went to the liquor store.
I bought some wine used for cooking from the liquor store.
It's the first time I've bought wine.

“Sherry, is there a strong liquor distilled from a sweet fruit wine?”
“There is, it’s a liqueur.”

Liqueur?
I’ve heard of it.
Sherry recommends it, so I buy a small pot of it.

Next is the green grocer.
I buy lemons and ask Sherry something.

“Fruits that look like this, isn’t there a sweet one?”
“Gamu. It’s hard to get because it isn’t in season at the moment. It’s normally produced during the winter.”

There’s no chance in summer?
It might be like a mandarin if it can be gotten during winter.
Oh.
What is the season for lemon?

“This is produced during the summer?”
“Now it is, though it used to be only available in the winter.”
“There are actually two kinds. The regular one that can be bought from autumn to winter, and this smaller one produced in the north that can be gotten during summer.”
“They last a reasonably long time, and because both are farmed you can get them most of the year without interruption.”
“I see.”

Sherry didn’t seem to know, but the green grocer told us about it.

“There aren’t many fruits this season. What about the kyupiko? There will be more variety again soon.”

The green grocer points out the fruit that looks like a carrot.
The kyupiko.
I’ll use the kyupiko for now, so I buy it and return home.

When we return to the house, I make some crepes.
One per person isn’t much, so I make two each.

Ten in total.
It's tough.

Vesta tried to give me a hand cooking them as well.
Will you be able to do it next time?
I put the crepe in the frying pan with some sugar and liqueur, along with slices of the kyupiko.
The charcoal stove is prepared, and the frying pan is put over it.

"Umm. Is it the one made in the experiment the other day?"
"We'll enjoy it after dinner."

I replied with a smile to Roxanne.

"It was very delicious, and I liked it."

There's a chance of failing it.
But it should be fine.

"Vesta, please fire it up."
"Okay."

During dinner, Vesta started the fire.

"Is it alright to use fire made by someone from the dragon tribe for food?"
"It's never sustained to warm the food right up, and I haven't heard of it being harmful."
"Can you ignite liquor?"
"Yes. I don't think there is any problem if I blow fire on it for a bit."

It seems to be alright.
This will be good.

Near the end of dinner, we warm the crepes up.
Vesta watches me spoon something into the frying pan, then I pass the handle to her.

"Good. Vesta, can you add some fire to the frying pan?"

I asked when I had finished preparing.
Vesta breathed a little fire.
The fire danced around the frying pan for a little.
The flames rolled around, then changed colour from yellow to blue, and then disappeared.

It's a flambe.
I wanted to try doing it once.

"Oh? What happened?"
"Did you ignite the liquor?"
"Amazing, desu."
"Is this alright?"

It seems I've stimulated everyone's mind with childlike wonder.
The Queen of the desserts, Crepe suzette.
Watching a chef prepare this in a french restaurant stimulates everyone's mind with childlike wonder.
After I saw it on television when I was a child, I really wanted it.

"It's alright."

The crepe suzette is taken from the frying pan, and divided amongst everyone's plates.
I prepared some brown sauce too.
I made caramel while I was testing the alcohol on the fire.

The kyupiko was a bit brown, but there shouldn't be any problem if I think about pineapple in sweet & sour pork.
Even though it looks like a carrot.

I moved it to the plates, distributing it in order.
I put it in front of Roxanne, next to me.

"Thank you."
"Everyone enjoy it."
"Okay."

After distributing it to everyone, I cut the crepe and bring it to my mouth.
It's warm.

It's also smooth and soft.
It has a gentle texture.

Not just the texture, but the taste is quite wonderful.
It's delicious.
A slight bitterness, with caramel sauce.

"After all, crepe is meant to be warm."
"This is amazing. Crepe? I've never heard of it. As expected of Master."
"I haven't heard of it either. Such a soft and gentle taste."
"Crepe, desu."

Even though it isn't fish, she seems to have tried to remember it.

"This is amazing. To make something so delicious is incredible. To eat so many delicious things is wonderful."

Vesta also stuffs her mouth with great wonder.
She seems to have liked it.

I'll have them fully express how much they liked it.
It will be Sex Maniac's turn after dinner.
Even though there are four of them, with Sex Maniac it isn't a big deal.
With Sex Maniac, it will be alright.

Maybe I should level up Sex Maniac after Swordsman.
No. There's no big reason for it.
Well, this is the only reason.

The [Increased Vigor] skill from Sex Maniac is probably level dependent.
I'm not having any problems with the current level, so that's not a reason.

I can handle four people, but how much is possible?
What are the limits?
It would be good to know in advance.
I should raise Sex Maniac's level before I find out.

Swordsman will probably be Lv30 soon.
It's not useful when Durandal isn't out.
I'm still increasing it's experience twenty times faster than normal though.

When you hit Lv30, there's a vast increase to get to Lv31.
There's another wall getting from Lv40 to Lv41.
Every ten levels things seem to get more difficult.
Most jobs branch out at Lv30 though, so that isn't too hard.

The next day, even though Swordsman hit Lv30, there was no new job.
It's possible there are conditions for it.
Even Assassin didn't appear when Warrior hit Lv30 unless you've defeated a demon with poison.

Now that Swordsman has been increased, I'll do Sex Maniac next.
There's no real meaning to leveling up Sex Maniac.
The mental suffering to leveling it might be rough.
However, there is no real trouble. Sex Maniac reaches Lv30 after a few days.

There was a message that a successful bid was made on a Green Caterpillar's monster card, so I received it from Luke and made a sacrificial misanga.
We now have a spare sacrificial misanga.
It might be good to fuse the Green Caterpillar's monster card to accessories other than the misanga.

The sacrificial skill is a disposable skill.
Having an item with it on there is a waste of space.
It's not expected to have it on a defensive item.

Until now, we've never broken a sacrificial misanga.
If we fight carefully, it's not likely that we'll break one often.

Also, even Sex Maniac didn't have a following job.
Maybe racial jobs don't have another job derived from them?
Next I'll level up merchant.

I know that merchant has a job derived from it.
It's slave trader.
Merchant also seems to have wealthy merchant, so slave trader is an alternate job.

Chapter 139 - Jobless

Next morning. By the time we finished exploration, my Merchant job had reached Lv30.
As I conjectured, I have acquired Slave Merchant Lv1.
It's confirmed now that it requires Merchant Lv30.

Earlier, there was an especial significance of leveling up Sex Maniac.
Because it is still too early, however, I can't say anything in that regard.
Honestly, Slave Merchant's effects and skills are not to the extent to be able to be called special.

For some reason, I have acquired one more job.
There seem to be more derivative jobs of Merchant.
It's called Jobless.

Jobless Lv1
Effects | Empty
Skills | Effect Settings | Skill Settings | Empty

I don't get how Jobless can be a derivative job of Merchant.
There are empty effect and skill slots present. Are the effect and skill slots empty because their settings haven't been configured yet?
They seem to be same as empty skill slots on equipment.

Jobless seems to be able to set an effect and a skill.
There are two skills – Effect Settings and Skill Settings – so I can set it myself, I believe.
It seems to be a really interesting job.

"On that subject, Sherry, do you know about a job called Jobless?"

After leaving the labyrinth in order to buy ingredients for breakfast, I ask Sherry while walking.
Sherry may know something.

“It’s a job found only in legends. Not much details of that job are known.”

It’s called Jobless, it can not be famous for money, can it?

“It’s not well known?”
“Long ago, there was someone who claimed they had that job. As for the details of the job, no one knows.”

It doesn’t seem to be well known.
It seems to be a rare job.

“That person, who claimed that they were Jobless, didn’t disclose any details?”
“They just spontaneously spread the word one day that they were Jobless.”
“It sounds like a useless job.”

What kind of a man would declare himself that he’s jobless?

“I have heard something in this regard. Wasn’t Crown Prince Jobless, too?”

Roxanne seems to know something.
As expected of the world renowned Toyama Sakura. (TN: I have no idea in what context the author said this)
He’s crown prince, not shogun?

“Crown Prince?”
“That’s right, Crown Prince. He has been disinherited, however. He is said to be the worst crown prince in the successive generations. He’s a man with no patience. He quits one job and takes another, and keeps doing it over and over again. Furthermore, lying is his forte. He’s a true good-for-nothing. An imperial good-for-nothing.”

That’s harsh.
Oh well, he’s a NEET crown prince, after all.
It’s better to keep Jobless concealed from the world.

“Words of such a person can’t be taken seriously.”

O-O-O-Oh
I shut my mouth up and listen quietly.

Crown Prince must have had his own reasons.
That's probably why he took various jobs.

I was of the idea that Jobless is a derivative job of Merchant but it doesn't seem to be the case.
It's probably acquired by acquiring different jobs.
When I acquired Slave Merchant, I must have reached the requisite number.

There's no relationship between Merchant and Jobless.
It is just a coincidence that I acquired it after my Merchant job reached Lv30.
Is Jobless by any chance the last job?
That's not possible for I haven't acquired Adventurer and Priest yet.

Is there an upper limit in respect of the number of jobs one can possess?
There's no such thing, probably, so I don't need to be worried too much.
My worries are unfounded.
They have to be unfounded.

To relieve my anxiety, I switch my sixth job to Jobless.
I invoke Effect Settings.
A long list of job effects floats up inside my head. I was of the idea that I would have to choose one from the effects of Jobless. However, I can choose from the effects of other jobs, too, it seems.
Interesting.

Because there are Explorer, Hero, Wizard and Monk in the list, it seems to allow you to choose one from the effects of the jobs you possess.
If you could select the strongest effect and skill of the strongest job via Effect and Skill Settings, Jobless would be the strongest job.

You can choose an effect only from the jobs you possess.
In a way, you won't be jobless anymore.
In other words, the more the jobs one has, the stronger Jobless becomes.

As the effect of Jobless, I select the most powerful, Hero's Medium Increase in Intelligence.
With Increase in Intelligence, my magic attack power will increase, too.

Jobless Lv1
Effects | Medium Increase in Intelligence
Skills | Effect Settings | Skill Settings | Empty

It's configurable, indeed.
It's a pity, though, that I can set only one.
If it weren't limited to one, it would be better than Hero.

Hero has eight job effects. Allow me to choose three, at least.
If it could allow three or four effects and skills, it would be best for someone like Roxanne who can use no more than one job.

Even if I could select two effects, it would be better. I would choose two Medium Increase in Intelligence effects.
If there were two empty slots, would it let me choose two Medium Increase in Intelligence effects?
If not, would it let me choose one Medium Increase in Intelligence and one Small Increase in Intelligence?
Vesta's Dragon Knight has one Medium Increase in Endurance, one Small Increase in Endurance and one Minute Increase in Endurance.

Oh well, there's no use in talking about 'ifs'.
In my case, since I can use multiple jobs, there has to be a mechanism to use multiple jobs.

Next, I try to set the skill.
I choose Item Box skill of Explorer.
While buying food ingredients, I open Item Box to confirm it.

Item box has gained only one new column beside the previously available 44 columns.
Because Jobless was acquired just now, the Item Box of Jobless could only add one column
Since Jobless is only Lv1, the capacity of its Item Box is merely 1×1.
It's same as when I acquired Explorer.

Just because I chose the Item Box of Explorer Lv44 doesn't mean that its capacity would be 44×44.
The level of the skill seems to depend on the level of the job.

Is it perhaps same in case of effect, too?
Even though I chose Medium Increase in Intelligence effect of Hero Lv41, the degree of increment will be that of Jobless Lv1.
It's a shame.

Nah, because you don't need to level up both the jobs, isn't it great?
If you had to level up both Jobless and the job which the skill was borrowed from, wouldn't that be terrible?
Not for me, though, for I can use multiple jobs.

What will happen if I choose Cook's Item Box skill?
Will it be 30 columns like Cook's?
Let's try.

I invoke Skill Settings to choose a job… I can't.

Eh?
Don't tell me.
Can a skill be set only once?

No way!
Let's try again.
Just as I feared, I can't.
The skill seems to be able to be set only once.

Gahn!
I was careless.
I have made a blunder.

I chose such a petty skill as Item Box.
Oh well, it'll be of some use when it reaches Lv99.

"Err, let's return quickly and eat something."

If it's a one-use only skill, mention it!
Skill Settings is a one-use only skill, huh?
Or is there such a thing as skill setting rights?

Nope. You can't rewrite a skill in the skill slot of an equipment. It must be same in this case, too.

It was imprudent of me to think that it was possible.
At the very least, because I chose Medium Increase in Intelligence effect, I have saved some face.

Jobless seems to be able to choose one skill and one effect from the available jobs only once.
To be able to choose a skill and an effect from different jobs, it's fitting for a job that's acquired by acquiring numerous jobs.
But it's one-use only.

If that's the case, then there's a weight in the theory that Jobless is the last job.
If Jobless is the last job, then you don't have to be concerned about the jobs that you may acquire later on when choosing the skill and the effect from the jobs that you already possess.
I have made a blunder.

I prepare breakfast to distract myself.
It's not delicious. It must be the first time after coming to this world.
Haa

Now that I think about it, is Effect Settings a one-use only skill, too?
When I think about it, the meal becomes even less delicious.
After having breakfast, I try to invoke Effect Settings.

I can choose.
Effect Settings doesn't seem to be a one-use only skill.
How many times can Effect Settings be used then?

Twice, perhaps?
I wonder.
I try to choose Small Increase in Endurance effect of Explorer.
I have already chosen such a petty skill as Item Box, so it doesn't matter anymore.

Jobless Lv1
Effects | Small Increase in Endurance
Skills | Effect Settings | Skill Settings | Item Box

Apparently, you can choose both the skill and the effect of the same job.
In that case, because I already have Explorer, which is obviously better, I

don’t need this one.
Can I turn the effect back to Medium Increase in Intelligence?
I try to invoke Effect Settings and choose a job… I can’t.

Eh?
Two-use only, really?
I try again, flustered. I can’t.
No way!

No, wait.
Reuse time?
It suddenly occurs to me, so I try to invoke Skill Settings again.
I can choose now.

What a relief.
After using Effect Settings and Skill settings once, I seem to need to wait before using them again.
They’re not one-use or two-use only skills.

If I think about it, Skill Settings didn’t disappear after using it once.
Now I get why.

Reuse time, huh?
I see.
Exactly how long is the cooldown period, though?
Last I used it was before buying food ingredients. From then till now, how much time has passed? About an hour, maybe?

Which means that I can’t use it frequently.
There’s no need to change the effect every time.
Nope. When using Durandal, I’ll have to change it to Medium Increase in Strength. When using magic, I’ll have to change it back to Medium Increase in Intelligence.
Isn’t it?

As the skill of Jobless, I choose Basic Fire Magic of Wizard.
Currently, it’s not possible for me to cast two fire spells simultaneously.
However, isn’t it so because they belong to the same job?
Right after casting a spell, it is possible to cast Heal (of Monk). It is also possible to open Item Box (of Explorer) and invoke Crude Medicine Concoction (of Herbalist).

Furthermore, bonus spells can be used right after, too.
Even if I can't use multiple spells of Wizard simultaneously, I may be able to simultaneously use spells of Wizard and Jobless.
I better try it.

"Laundry is done."
"Alright then, let's go to Haruba's 21st floor right away."
"Okay."

When Roxanne was done with laundry, we move to Haruba's 21st floor.
We further the exploration and encounter a group of three Rtoll Trolls and a Rub Shrub.
This is convenient.

I cast first Firestorm.
Followed immediately by another one.
Sparks fly about.
And engulf the monsters.

Oops
I have no way of knowing if the second one succeeded or not.
After the flames die out, I cast third Firestorm.
If the last one didn't succeed, this one would be second.

The sparks flutter and engulf the monsters. When the sparks start to fade, I cast fourth Firestorm.
The sparks flare up and engulf the monsters again.
Success!
I have succeeded in casting spells simultaneously.

It's good to have succeeded and all but this time, I don't know when to cast the next spell.
Before the flames of the fourth spell die out, the next spell in the third's place should become available.
Whatever, I'll just keep on casting Firestorm.
My body will know when the next spell will be available for use.

I cast fifth Firestorm.
The sparks flare up again, indicating that it succeeded.
As for the sixth spell, I can't cast it simultaneously.
I'm glad that they didn't move.

After a while, I cast again.
Before I could cast the seventh, however; the monsters, ablaze, try to attack.
Because they're ablaze, is that why their speed is relatively slower?
It can't vary to this extent, can it?

Roxanne dodges the Rtoll Troll's attack.
After the seventh spell, it's time to cast the eighth.
Miria thrusts her Estoc of Petrifaction into the Rub Shrub.
I cast ninth Firestorm.

The monsters keep burning. Before I could cast the tenth spell, however, the monsters collapse.
Critical must have proc'd in that while.
Roxanne looks at me with a surprised look about her face.

"This was a sort of an experiment. Okay?"
"Okay. The duration of the battle was considerably shorter."

It should roughly be half.
The time required to attack the monsters again after attacking them once has decreased significantly.
Let's suppose that I could take the Rtoll Trolls out in ten fire spells. This time, it wasn't until seventh spell that the vanguards had to confront the monsters. Earlier, it would be four spells before the vanguards would be called into action but this time, it was about twice of that, six spells.
Because two spells then are essentially four now, the time the vanguards are supposed to confront the monsters will be considerably shorter.

"The sparks were flashier than before. Magic- no, did you change the way you use magic?"

Sherry shares her impression.
That's it, more or less.
As you would expect.
Because the sparks kept dancing constantly during the battle, they looked flashier, surely.

"Were they? Well, to put it simply, I can use multiple fire spells simultaneously. I'm doing this experiment in relation to that. The test will continue for a short while. From now, this will be my main style of fighting."

“You can do even such a thing? As expected of Master.”
“But umm, such a thing is impossible, isn’t it?”

Sherry is at a loss.
It’s impossible, huh?
Well, it obviously is.

“Amazing, desu.”
“You can do even such a thing?”

Miria and Vesta are totally under Roxanne’s spell.

Normally, you can’t use two Wizard jobs.
The man of the world, Gozer, is a grand wizard. Even he can’t use both Wizard and Grand Wizard at the same time.
I, however, can use Wizard, Grand Wizard and Jobless. Triple jobs, that is.

Three simultaneous magic attacks, I would call it Jet Stream Attack.
I look forward to the future.

Chapter 140 - Continuous attack

“Since I don’t need an incantation, I might be able to use magic continuously.”

I told this to Roxanne and Sherry so they weren’t confused.
[Incantation Omission] isn’t really a requirement for it.
Multiple jobs is the important part for continuous magic.

“Can you fire as often as you like since you don’t have an incantation?”
“Well, I can’t do that much…”

Sherry exchanged a glance with Roxanne.
She’s thinking something.

“Is something wrong?”
“Normally you’ll call out to each other when you’re about to use skills or magic in a party..”
“We don’t have a problem in our party since only Master uses magic, but incantations don’t work well when two or more people use them because of what they call an Incantation Resonance.” TN: BAM, all your dreams of 6 Wizard parties are gone.

Sherry follows up Roxanne’s explanation.
So Incantations can’t overlap?
Then it would be difficult to have continuous magic.

When Roxanne mentions it, it seems to be something everyone knows about.
It’s the first time I’ve heard of it.

“Is that so. Did everyone know that?”
“I know, desu.”
“I think I’ve also heard it.”

Miria sticks out her chest proudly when I ask her.
Vesta seems to already know as well.

“Because of Incantation Resonance, there are no times where two or more parties will cooperate in exploring the labyrinth. There aren’t many instances of multiple Wizards in a party either, but when there are they alternate shooting magic.”
“Hmmm. As expected of Sherry.”

I was thinking that three wizards in the rear would make a considerably strong party, but I hadn’t seen one so far.
So there was another reason, aside from just the rarity of Wizards?
Two or more people can’t chant an incantation at the same time.
They might need to alternate because of MP problems as well.

“For people who enter the labyrinth, this is common sense.”
“I see. So magic can’t be used continuously because the incantations interfere with each other, well, that doesn’t really matter to me.”

I look away from Sherry, and let her think about it on her own.

“As expected of Master.”

Roxanne welcomes it.
It’s comforting.
Yes. I want to call you the soul mate of my heart.

“It’s still at the experimental stage, so I’ll continue testing it a bit more.”

I kept testing Jobless.
The next demons are two Rtoll Troll’s.
This is no problem.
I use double [Fire storm].

After the ninth shot, I focused on their appearance.
Since they weren’t defeated, I used a tenth shot.
The Rtoll Trolls burnt again and became smoke.

Since I don’t know when critical’s happen, it’s hard to judge the end. If critical’s happen, I don’t need the tenth shot.

MP is consumed, even if I use the attack magic when there is no demon.
I should use it after confirming if the demon is defeated or not.

The demon could be defeated by the sixth or seventh shot if there is a large amount of criticals.
I can't plan for that though.
It would be extremely rare if the demon was defeated after the seventh.

The next group had a Hat Bat and three Rtoll Troll's.
It's the first time fighting a Hat Bat with Jobless.
I can't change the skill in Jobless often.
The only thing I can do is use fire magic for it against the Hat Bat.

It's a problem that I can only set one skill.
I'm not asking for four, but at least two would be nice.
If I had two, I can set one to the demon from the current level's weakness, and one to the demon on the previous level's weakness.
At least the Hat Bat doesn't have a resistance to fire magic.

I repeatedly use the double [Fire Storm] again.
Should I have done something else?
Was there something?
No. I think this was the least troublesome for now.

Jobless can only keep using fire magic after the Rtoll Trolls are defeated.
Water magic could defeat the Hat Bat quicker.
Since there are three Rtoll Trolls, defeating them as my priority is fine this time.

What should I do for the ninth shot?
There's the possibility that a critical will happen.
If there is a critical by the ninth shot, then the ninth and tenth spell don't both have to be fire magic.
Jobless can only shoot fire magic though.

Can I plan for if it's the fire magic of wizard, or the fire magic of jobless that is used first?
I'll have to test it.

I try to use [Water Storm] as the ninth.
I continue by using [Fire Storm] for the tenth.

Both fog and sparks dance in the surrounding area.
It's good that I can use both.

Jobless isn't set to water magic, so the water magic is from wizard.
It seems to have gone well.
Demons are in boiling water hell because of water and fire.
The Rtoll Trolls fall from the boiling water hell.

Did a critical appear?
If I think about the Rtoll Trolls falling on the ninth spell, should I make the tenth a single target attack spell?
The difference in MP consumption would be useful.

Should I have made the fifth and seventh shots [Water Storm] as well?
If there are Hat Bat's and Rtoll Trolls, alternately using Wind & Fire magic would finish the fight the quickest.
The fight becomes easier when the number of demons decreases, so should I prioritize cutting down the number of demons?
The number of demons was probably the best priority this time since there were three Rtoll Trolls, but what about if the different demons have equal numbers?

What about if there are two Hat Bat's and one Rtoll Troll?
Jobless can only use fire magic, so defeating the Hat Bat's quicker wouldn't work.
Is it impossible?

Jobless can only use fire magic.
If I alternate water and fire, then the Rtoll Troll will be defeated at the same time as the Hat Bat's.
Should I defeat the lone Rtoll Troll quicker just to cut down the numbers?
I'm thinking about various things.

I use [Breeze ball] on the remaining Hat Bat.
I follow up with a successive [Fire Ball] as the 12th spell.
Ooops. The [Fire Ball] hovers over my head.

The [Breeze Ball] and [Fire Ball] seem to be interfering with each other.
Is this the interference resonance?
As the flame wavered around, I watched the Hat Bat.
Will things be alright?

Maybe some things have a synergy effect.
Could fire magic and earth magic make lava hell?
That would be nice.

In that case, what would happen to resistances and weaknesses?
If there is a resistance to water or fire, can boiling water hell be resisted?
That would be bad.

It's hard to understand, and getting more complex.
I need to simplify it.
I should pause the attack magic and shoot separately.
I won't know which shot will defeat it because of criticals.

If I assume that there are no criticals, when will it be defeated?
Annoying.
I alternately use [Breeze ball] and [Fire ball].

The bat shakes in the wind, and is knocked around by the fire ball's continuously.
With another [Breeze ball], the Hat Bat crashes down.
That's it?
Using them separately seems to be the correct answer.

"You can continuously use the single target attack magic."
"It's a bit troublesome."

I can probably use the fire magic continuously.
I appreciate Sherry thinking about it.

The next fight is two Hat Bat's and an Rtoll Troll.
Crap. I'm not sure what to do yet.
I use [Water Storm] on instinct.

Oh.
Since there are two Hat Bat's, I reflexively used water magic like I always have.
Is it alright to use the water magic?
I use the fire magic second.

It's probably good.
There are three demons, so the three vanguards are in one vs one's.
There won't be much advantage if only one is defeated early.

The combat is longer if I delay fighting the Hat Bat's, so the disadvantage increases.
What should I do? I don't understand it well.

"I did it, desu."

In addition, there is that as well.
Rtoll Troll was petrified.

Even if I come to the conclusion that I should focus on the Rtoll Troll first, it might all come to nothing.
It's useless to think about it.
Best guess is alright.
Let's go with that.

I alternately use [Fire Storm] and [Water Storm].
Rtoll Troll becomes smoke first.
You become weak to magic when petrified, so being defeated first is normal.
Eventually the Hat Bat's fall too.

Were there any criticals?
I'm not sure. Let's give up on thinking too deeply about it.

I stop thinking about it, and just fight for a while.
It's good.
I only experiment a little.
When the Hat Bat comes out, I use [Fire Storm] first, then try to use [Water Storm].

There is no fog, even though there are sparks.
The water magic doesn't seem to have happened.
When I try to use [Fire Storm] instead the sparks flare up.
It's a success.

Wizards fire magic must have been the first fire magic.
When I tried to use [Water Storm], Jobless does not have water magic, so it

didn't work since Wizard was already using fire.
Then when I tried to use [Fire Storm] instead, it worked since Jobless has fire magic.

Following that, water magic worked, so it's certain that the first fire magic was from wizard.
Is the order of magic decided by the order of jobs?

After the combat ends, I make Jobless the third job, and wizard the sixth job.
The next group is a combination of Rub Shrub and Rtoll Troll, so I defeat them using just fire magic. The next group after that has a Hat Bat, so I use water magic.
I also use the fire magic, and the fog and sparks appear as expected.

The order of water followed by fire, went well.
But, there is no water in Jobless.
The wizards magic went first, then jobless's magic which had been skipped went second.

It's logical.
It goes in the order of the jobs.
Wizard came before Jobless because I didn't use magic that Jobless had first.

I continue hunting demons without thinking much more about it.
There might still be some room for improvement in the order, but I'm not sure.
I return the effect of Jobless to the increased intellect effect from Hero.
It's probably not very effective at the moment since the jobs level is low.

It's great to be able to use two magic jobs.
It speeds up our exploration as well.
There might not be any formidable enemies on this floor anymore.
We still need to be careful though.

As I become more familiar with Jobless, we find the boss room of the 21st floor.
There is a small room with only an entry door and an exit door.
The waiting room.

"It's the waiting room?"
"Yes, desu."

Miria is motivated.
Ma Bream will appear on the 22nd floor.

I prepare Durandal, and remove Jobless.
Warrior is used instead of Jobless.
I don't need to use Swordsman anymore since I got it up to Lv30.
I could change Jobless's skill to [Rush], but the cooldown probably wouldn't be over to allow me to switch it back by the time we defeated the boss.

Now that I can use double magic, after this I'll probably spend even more fights using magic instead of Durandal.
What should I do?
Should I even use magic in boss fights?

It's not a good idea to change my fighting style suddenly.
I'll use Durandal this time.
The opponent is a boss after all.

I'll fight against the boss on the 22nd floor many times.
I'll try fighting with magic once there.
Or, should I be more careful and start from a lower floor?

The door to the boss room opened, and I entered with Durandal.
Smoke gathers, and two demons show up.
Rtoll Troll, and Roll Troll.
Vesta charges the Rtoll Troll, and the other three take on the boss.

After using [Abnormal resistance decrease] on the boss, I attack the Rtoll Troll.
Safely from the side, I attack the Rtoll Troll, and then the boss until they are defeated.
There was no petrification this time, but it was almost peaceful attacking the boss from behind.

I'm just stationary artillery.
Aside from Roxanne, Vesta can fight a demon well too.
Fighting the boss and the other demon is a constant fight right from the start.
Unlike fighting in the caves of the labyrinth, where there is a small wait before coming into contact with the demons.

I'll have to think about it when we get to the 22nd floor boss room.
For now it's enough just to have set foot on the 22nd floor.

"The demon on the 22nd floor is Ma Bream?"
"Yes. The demon on Haruba's 22nd floor is Ma Bream."

I confirm it with Sherry.
It's Ma Bream.

Now using Cook is a problem.
Explorer, Hero, Wizard, Monk, Gambler, and Jobless are my six jobs, and it's still not enough?
People become useless quickly when they get accustomed to their luxuries.

Chapter 141 - The Road to the Waterfall

“We will go to Quratar’s labyrinth tomorrow morning. Today, we will continue with Haruba’s 22nd floor. I will be relying on you, Roxanne.”
“Understood.”

We move to 22nd floor.
I decide to fight without using Cook.
If I kill a large number, I should be able to stock whole fish.

I choose Basic Earth Magic of Wizard as the skill of Jobless.
For Haruba’s 22nd floor, it is good to use earth magic as it is the attribute Ma Bream’s weak against.
And I can use earth magic against Hat Bat as well.

But despite that, my first encounter on 22nd floor is two Rtoll Trolls.
That’s troublesome.
I cast [Firestorm] when they enter my line of sight, followed by [Sandstorm].
The sparks and sand dance together.

Even though I cast sand and fire spells this time, it didn’t look like there was an interference between the two area of effect magic attacks.
I guess it is fine to push the monsters down with lava hell.

But the sand is not melting, so I guess it is sand bath, not lava hell.
It must feel good, I guess.
But Isn’t that actually bad?

Casting spells continuously, I take out the Rtoll Trolls.
It fell down even with the sand bath.
So I guess it must not have felt good.

“……”

Sherry looks toward me suspiciously.
The reason being, I used earth magic against the Rtoll Trolls.
Which reminds me, didn't I mention earlier that I was able to cast continuous fire spells?

"It was fire magic on 21st floor but on Haruba's 22nd floor, it is better to use earth magic continuously."
"I see, it was like that, huh? So you can do even something like that."

Sherry buys my explanation and nods her head admiringly.
Even though I felt like I missed with my first explanation, it turned out fine in the end.

"As expected of Master."

As far as Roxanne is concerned, I don't need to explain anything.

"Amazing, desu."
"So that's what it was?"

And these two are under Roxanne's influence.
I am not sure if they even understood what I just explained.

I greet the next group of one Ma Bream and two Rtoll Trolls with continuous earth and fire spells.
I am not sure if it is a good thing to take out Ma Breams first by using continuous earth magic. However, since I am not sure if it is good thing, I decide not to worry about it too much.
Thinking about too many things will eventually cause me to freeze.
The spells engulf the monsters.

"It's coming."

Ge. Ma Bream shoots water back to return the favor.
Should I have taken it out first, after all?
Well, I would probably not have been able to finish it off that quick anyway.

Roxanne dodges it precisely.
The water shot flies by my side.
It is I, not Roxanne, who is in the rear, that needs to be careful behind her.

I cast spells while waiting for the monsters.
Two Rtoll Trolls move in front.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Vesta and I will handle the Rtoll Trolls. Miria, take care of the right.”
“Okay.”
“Understood.”

After Miria asks something, Roxanne gives instructions to organize the vanguard formation.
Roxanne and Vesta are dealing with the Rtoll Trolls.
Miria is dealing with the Ma Bream that arrived late for it was using water magic.

Even if Ma bream became stone, it would not be possible for me to take out the Rtoll Trolls first because I can only use earth magic using Jobless.
But on the other hand, since there are two Rtoll Trolls, it would not matter if one of them were petrified.
In short, it doesn’t matter what happens to the monster that Miria is fighting.

In the end, there was no petrifaction this time. I knocked all the three of them using magic.
The three of them died at the same time since I used earth magic, which is Ma Bream’s weakness, and fire magic, which is Rtoll Troll’s weakness, at the same time.
Because it has now reached a point where I can cast spells continuously, the duration of battles has become shorter, so there is even less chance for petrifaction to proc.
There is no helping it.

“White, desu.”

Miria brought the drop item white fish.
Because I don’t have Cook selected, the drop rate of whole fish will be less.
There is no helping this one as well.

Miria seems happy even with the white fish.
Not being accustomed to luxury is good.
I will have you eat white fish tempura till you die.

“Because it took so much effort to find Ma Bream on this floor, how about we be content with the white fish for today’s dinner?”
“Yes, desu.”
“We will be having whole fish, too, of course. As for the whole fish, how about the day after tomorrow?”
“Ooh. Yes, desu.”

With this, she will probably not be disappointed when the drop rate of whole fish is low.
We explored until evening. Whole fish was dropped on more than two occassions.
As I thought, even without Cook, I would get a few after killing a large number.

I will stop by the Imperial Capital on the way to pick up the clothes.
Today is the day when the maid outfit was supposed to be ready.
I warp us to the adventurers’ guild in the Imperial Capital and head to the clothing shop.

“Welcome back. The clothes are ready, please wait a minute.”

The shop clerk immediately receives us when we enter the shop.
Last time, I wasn’t given any such thing as a receipt.
It seems they remember their customers.
Can this be expected of a high-class shop in the Capital?

I move forward to the counter.
When the shop clerk heads inside, I manage to steal a peak. There’s a number of clothes inside.
All these clothes are custom-made. Does the shop clerk remembers what every single customer ordered?

I respect him.
It is impossible for me, at least.
There must be a register somewhere, though.

The shop clerk comes back with one set of clothes.
Since it looks like a maid outfit, I don’t think there’s any mistake.

Huh?
Inside, there’s something similar to Uchikake.

(TL:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kimono#Uchikake)
There is also a matching white dress for that Uchikake.
It's strangely Japanese.
It looks like a white kimono.
Is it really possible for this world to have something like this?

No, is it a gown?
It might be something similar to a bathrobe.
It is not exactly a Furisode either.
(TN: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Furisode)
"Is that a gown?"
"Does it look like that?"

I ask, pointing my finger to it, but Roxanne doesn't know either.

"Umm, that's…"
"Oh, do you know what it is, Sherry?"

Sherry seems to know about it.
As expected of Sherry.

"This outfit is lent to the people who apply to the priests' guild to become shrine maiden. Do you want to have a shrine maiden outfit arranged?"

It's a shrine maiden's clothing?
No wonder it looks Japanese.
So it's that, huh?

"A daughter of certain family plans to become a shrine maiden so they asked for one."

The shop clerk explains after he brings the maid outfit.
Is it a tradition of shrine maidens?
Which reminds me, Sherry tried to become a shrine maiden, too.
She didn't have sufficient level to acquire Shrine Maiden job. It must not be a pleasant memory, I believe.

"So it's like that, huh?"
"If you order it from our shop, we will use silk to make it soft and comfortable. Also, we will make the clothes to be perfect fit for the person.

In the training to become a priest or shrine maiden, one needs to meditate under the waterfall. Beside being fashionable, it's functional as well; a lot of people order it. So, what about you?"
"If I get the opportunity, I guess."

To acquire Shrine Maiden job, I need to perform waterfall meditation.
Do I need to be in white clothes to perform waterfall meditation?
Am I supposed to wear before entering the basin under the waterfall?

It is white, made from silk, so it's probably not that thick.
What would happen if I were under the water, wearing thin white clothes?
……'It' will.

"In the guild, the ascetic training is conducted at the waterfall separately for males and females. As long as the lower half of your body is properly covered, there will be no problem."

The shop clerk tells me quietly.
Are you a psychic?
This clerk, he's good.

"I'll be visiting again soon."
"We will be waiting for you."

I receive the maid outfit and leave the shop.
Since I have received the clothes, I temporarily return home.
I warp us to home from the Imperial Capital's Adventurers' Guild.

"Then I will change my clothes."

When we get back home, Roxanne starts taking her clothes off immediately.
Wait, wait, wait!
Calm down, Roxanne.

Because I know that Roxanne's magnificent things will pop out if she removes her clothes.
We are yet to buy the ingredients for dinner.
I remember that last time, I greedily savored their taste immediately after they got their maid outfits.
I am the one who is at fault.

“Not now, after the dinner. It will be better to wash our bodies first.”
“Is that so?”

Somehow, I managed to calm myself down and went out to buy ingredients for dinner.
Afterwards, we had the dinner.
We had tempura tonight. l let Miria eat her fill of white fish.

I have been relatively reserved these past days but it will become hot from now on.
I don’t want to make tempura on hot days.
It might be our last tempura this season.

“To acquire Shrine Maiden we need to perform ascetic training at the waterfall, right? Would any waterfall do?”

I ask Sherry while eating.
Even though she may hate recalling it,
I can’t help it.
It is necessary.

“Although the location is determined by the guild, I didn’t hear anything regarding specific waterfall or conditions.”
“Really? But the problem is the location of the waterfall.”
“Are you going to perform waterfall meditation?”
“I guess.”

I’ll have to do it sooner or later if I am to acquire it.
Especially, after having seen that outfit.
Nope, acquiring the job is important, too.

“Know, desu.”

Miria seem to know where it is.
Eating, and eating, and still eating white fish.

“Does Miria know where the waterfall is?”
“Fishing, desu.”

She probably caught fish in the basin under the waterfall at some point.
As expected of the big fish lover.
Eating, and eating, and still eating white fish.

“Did Miria chance upon the waterfall when she caught fish?”
“The other day the first time, desu.”

I can’t get this code language.
When was this ‘other day’.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“It was the other day when we had a day off. She heard someone talking about a waterfall in the vicinity.”
“Yes, desu.”

Roxanne translates after talking to Miria.
By fishing, did she mean fishing that time?
It was when I brought Vesta home.

“Is there a waterfall near that coast?”
“There seems to be a waterfall which the guild used as ascetic training ground until a while ago.”
“Freshwater, fishing, desu.”

I see.
So Miria collected information for that purpose, huh?
Considering the result, it turned out well, somehow.
Eating, and eating, and still eating white fish.

“It should be fine, especially, since it was used as ascetic training ground before. But the problem is, why is it no longer being used.”
“Dangerous, desu.”
“I guess it is no longer in use because monsters might have appeared. It is a common occurence.”

Sherry comments this time.
Monsters start appearing in the vicinity if a labyrinth emerges.
It will, of course, not be used if it gets dangerous.

In this world, there seem to be a lot of dangerous things.
It seems to be common.
Since it's us, taking a little risk shouldn't be a problem, right?

"It seems usable then. But without seeing it once, I will not be sure."
"See, desu."

We are not going for fishing, though.
I guess it will be fine.
Miria picks up another white fish tempura.

Eating, and eating, and still eating white fish.
Is she from Edo?
She's the rebirth of Kanda.

During the dinner I enjoyed tempura; after the dinner, I'll enjoy their outfits.
Eating, and eating.
By the way, Vesta has put on her maid outfit, too. I carry them to the bedroom one by one.
Just when I was thinking as to why they are not changing in the bedroom, it turned out like this.

Is this the reason why Roxanne suddenly took her clothes off earlier in the living room?
Without having any particularly displeased expression about my face, without showing the thrill inside my heart, I carry all of them to the bedroom.
I embrace Vesta in both my hands, carrying her without any trouble.
It is because I train hard everyday in the labyrinth.

I don't mean she is heavy or anything.
It did not cause any pain in my back.
My back is perfectly fine even now.
I train myself everyday, after all. (TN: Yeah, as if casting spells will build your strength)

In the morning, after grabbing the map of Quratar's labyrinth, we move to 21st floor.
The monster native to 21st floor is Kettle Mermaid, the weakness of which is earth magic, so it's better to set it as the skill of Jobless.

Petrifaction didn't proc even after using Abnormal Status Resistance Down but we took the boss out safely.

This makes it two consecutive boss battles where petrifaction didn't proc. I wonder if I was simply lucky the first time.

"The monster native to Quratar's 22nd floor is Clamshell."
"Do we have any clams remaining? Let's try fighting once for now. After that, how about moving to Haruba? Roxanne, can you guide us to a place with Clamshells?"
"Certainly."

After fighting Clamshells once, I warp us to Haruba's labyrinth.
We have fought against Clamshells in Haruba's labyrinth already. Also, because I have confirmed the strength of the monsters on 22nd floor, there will be no problem.
For both Clamshells and Kettle Mermaids are weak against earth magic, Quratar's 22nd floor shouldn't prove difficult for us.

Chapter 142 - Earring

After having breakfast, we head to the Imperial Capital.
I warp us to the wall of the adventurers' guild and move out.

"I'll go the clothing shop and have the clothes, which we saw yesterday, tailored for you."
"Shrine maiden's?"

When I tell everyone, Roxanne responds as the representative of the rest.

Because Sherry already has Shrine Maiden job, she doesn't need one.
But I can't say out loud that Sherry will be the only one won't be getting one.

"It's alright. Sherry has already performed meditation under the waterfall. I'll have you teach us all about it."
"Y-Yes."

After I persuade her, we enter the shop.
The usual male shop clerk receives us.

"Welcome."
"I would like to have same shrine maiden clothes as yesterday tailored for these four here."
"Thank you very much. We already have their measurements but let us confirm just in case."
"Please."

The four of them were led inside.
They seem to keep personal information of every customer.
They must also have the three sizes of all the noble young ladies.
It's a treasure trove!

“We would need five days to have the clothes ready. Would that be okay?”
“I understand.”
“Because the silk will be used as fabric, one outfit will cost 1,500 Nars. Since you’re having four outfits same as our recommendation yesterday tailored, we will give you a special, discounted price of 4,200 Nars.”

Is 1,500 high or low?
I don’t understand well.
My money sense is numb.
It being Nar, which I’m not accustomed to from the beginning, not Yen.

After placing the order for the clothes, we enter the labyrinth and kick the exploration off.
The exploration is progressing smoothly.
Nah, I can’t say for sure as we have yet to reach the boss room.
I casually advance.

After I acquired Jobless, because the casting speed has essentially doubled, the duration of battles has shortened significantly.
But it’s sometimes favorable and sometimes not.
It’s not something which I should be complaining about, though.
After the noon break, we enter the labyrinth in the afternoon.

“It’s about to be evening soon.”
“Alright, let’s return after an experiment.”

After Roxanne informs me of the time, I finish the exploration.
Because it takes time to reset the skill of Jobless, it’s not convenient to test it.
So I decided to test it at the end of the day.
Because it’s the last experiment of the day, even if I fiddle with the skill of Jobless, there won’t be any problem.

“Experiment? Is it related to the bath?”

Earlier, I told Roxanne that we would finish the exploration ahead of time to take bath.

“Well, yeah, it’s an experiment related to the bath.”
“Is it because you can now use it continuously?”

Sherry seems to have a vague idea of what the experiment is.
Because I can now use magic continuously, I can try it.
The time required to prepare the bath will be shorter.

“Bath, desu.”
“Yes, I look forward to it.”

Miria and Vesta are genuinely pleased.

After buying ingredients for dinner, we return home.
When we arrive at home, there was a note left at the entrance.
It’s from Luke the broker.

“Master, there’s a message from Mr. Luke. There seemed to be a successful bid of 5,500 Nars for a Goat Monster Card.”
“Oh, goat?”

With a Goat Monster Card, I can have 2x Intelligence skill attached.
Although things are going smooth as they are, there’s no harm in strengthening ourselves further.
Because the difficulty level of the monsters will jump up on the next, 23rd, floor; we have to become stronger.

“Increase in Intelligence, huh?”
“Say, it’s possible to have it fused with an accessory, right?”
“That’s right.”

I confirm with Sherry who was muttering to herself.
I can have 2x Intelligence skill attached to an accessory.
I wonder if it’s appropriate to attach it to an accessory or not.

It’s not currently a pressing problem for things are going smooth.
Because I already have a spare Sacrificial Misanga, I might as well try other accessories now.
Even if I attach 2x Intelligence skill to both a weapon and an accessory, I won’t be able to get 4x Intelligence — is what I have heard but who knows if it may work.
If attaching it to an accessory clicks, I can put the strategy of casting spells simultaneously with wielding Durandal to use.

“In any case, I’ll go receive it tomorrow. Ah, wait. Sherry, let’s go right away.”
“Okay.”
“I’ll be back in a bit.”
“Okay, please take care.”

I leave Roxanne at home and warp to the merchants’ guild with Sherry.
In order to attach 2x Intelligence skill, I don’t have a Kobold Monster Card.
I placed an order with Luke but there has been no notification of a successful bid.

“Can you go and look at the last successful bid on Kobold Monster Card?”
“Understood.”

I have Sherry check the last successful bid in the waiting room of the merchants’ guild.
The notebook, which the results of the auctions are recorded in, is kept in the waiting room.
Sherry turns over the papyrus of the notebook.

“Did you find it?”
“There was a successful bid of 5,500 Nars for Goat Monster Card today. Kobold Monster Card had a successful bid of 5,200 Nars yesterday. There was another bid of 5,200 Nars four days ago.”

Goat Monster Card went for 5,500 Nars, indeed.
He seems to make bids in accordance with the instructions given at the time of placing order.
Kobold Monster Card went for 5,200 Nars two successive times.
I have a bad feeling about this.

The person, who I sold the weapon with MP Absorption skill to, bought it at 5,200 Nars, too.
Is someone else buying the cards this time?
It’s the same card, Kobold Monster Card, and the same price.
There’s a possibility.

I return home immediately.
I must prepare the bath.
I select Basic Fire Magic as the skill of Jobless and use Waterwall and Firewall simultaneously.

“Damn!”

When I hold my hand out into the water, which was falling in the bathtub, it was really hot.
Success!
It worked better than I expected.
It really is boiling water hell.

Hot water is being produced via Waterwall and Firewall.
Now that I can produce water and heat it at the same time, it has become fairly easy.
We can now have bath more frequently.

However, the rate of consumption of MP hasn’t decreased, so I still have to recover my MP halfway through.
Rather, the efficiency of the process might have gone down due to Firewall.
For the first time after starting, I move to the labyrinth with Roxanne in order to recover my MP.

Because Wall magic designates the point of manifestation roughly, the points where the two magic spells manifest doesn’t overlap often.
They often stray away.
I wonder if I’ll get better at it if I practise more.

Another mistake I made was to have selected Basic Fire Magic as the skill of Jobless.
I should have selected water magic.
Because the water was quite hot, it would need to be regulated with more water.
Due to which, the frequency of Waterwall would naturally be more.

Oh well, it can’t be helped now.
At that time, I didn’t think it would go so well.
Next time, should I go with water magic then?

After having dinner, I take bath with everyone.
After getting our bodies washed, we soak ourselves in the hot water.
In the bathtub, I pull Roxanne close to me.
Sherry comes close, too.

I hold Roxanne and Sherry in both my arms.
Near my feet are Miria and Vesta.
It feels like I'm on a flowerbed.

Miria is floating excitedly.
Vesta…'s are floating, too.
I knew it! Having bath was the right decision.
Justice prevails.

As the skill of Jobless, I will try Critical Outbreak and Rare Ingredients Drop Rate Up next.
If I chose Gambler's or Cook's skills as the skill of Jobless, wouldn't it be a redundancy?
And it's not an immediate need anyway.
Also, even if it stacks, it'll only be 10% which is not much.

If it stacks, should I try Increased Vigor of Sex Maniac?
If Increased Vigor stacks, will the power of Abstinence Strike go up?
If it's true that the power of Abstinence Strike is directly proportional to the accumulated vigor, won't the speed of accumulation of vigor go up with two Increased Vigor skills?

I don't want to try it too much, though.
Since it will be really difficult for me to contain my sex drive.

Presently, I don't feel any need for more than one Increased Vigor.
So I won't try it forcibly.
After the bath, too, I didn't feel any need for more than one.

Next day. After having breakfast, I head to the merchants' guild.
I call for Luke and then enter the meeting room.

"Do you remember the broker who I received the Sacred Spear from?"

Luke takes out the Goat Monster Card.
It's the Goat Monster Card, undoubtedly.
The bid succeeded, after all.

"The heir of whose head family was receiving a noble's daughter as wife?"
"To tell you the truth, the bid this time was a little high, so I would like to

withdraw. Rather, if I succeed in the fusion of the previous Goat Monster Card and attach 2x Intelligence skill, I would then like to return it."
"2x Intelligence?"
"I know that it's unreasonable for there exists some kind of contract, still."

Earlier, I placed order for just one Goat Monster Card.
Would this be a suitable excuse for that?
Whatever I said to deceive him, he won't remember, surely.

"Ah, un"
"Alternatively, I would like to repurchase it when I get my hands on a Kobold Monster Card."

I bought two kobold monster cards from that broker.
If it's still remaining, I will repurchase it.

The ones I bought are all used up; I don't have any at hand.
If it's not remaining, will I be declined?
It can also mean that it's already taken.

"That broker has resumed bidding on Kobold Monster Card. For the time being, it will be impossible to have a successful bid within 5,000 Nars."

That broker seems to be the one who won the Kobold Monster Card at 5,200 Nars.
That's why the price is same, too.

"Kobold Monster Card?"
"After acquiring a weapon with MP Absorption skill, and it being a staff, those nobles are extremely rejoiced. And now, they're looking for other weapons of a wizard's use."

Is he being forced by those nobles?
Nobles are greedy. Rather, nobility wouldn't flourish without greed.
They have even sold their child, whom they took great pains to raise as a wizard, to that broker's house.
Even though they're called nobles, they're not worth it.

"This time around, it doesn't have to be one with MP Absorption skill?"
"Yes."

“Even if it isn’t a staff?”
“Any weapon a wizard can use would do. However, because they’re noble, it’ll be troublesome if it’s something common. Also, it should better be 2x Intelligence rather than Increase in Intelligence.”

Now then, what do I do?
The price of Kobold Monster Card will stay high until that broker arranges a weapon.
Furthermore, the cards effective for a weapon of wizard’s use will go extinct, too.
Goat Monster Card is secured but it will be really difficult to get a Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card.

And I’m afraid that there will be no Kobold Monster Card left, too.
I want to avoid a zero-return scenario.

“I have a Rod of Offerings at hand.”
“You have?”
“That’s right. I’ll be willing to sell it if I get at least one Kobold Monster Card.”

Because I have just bought a Goat Monster Card, I’ll be able to attach 2x Intelligence skill right away if I get my hands on a Kobold Monster Card.

“Is it really Rod of Offerings?”
“I’ll gladly sell it if I get a monster card in addition.”
“It’s a weapon of wizard’s use, but.”
“Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card would do, too.”

I got impatient for a moment but it’s fine now.

“I see, so you need it for that shrine maiden.”

It seems to be fine.

“As for the Rod of Offerings, it’s not like I’m doing a favor. As long as it’s around the market price, it would do.”
“I understand. I’ll convey it to him.”

Although I won't be able to try whether 2x Intelligence on an accessory stacks with the one on a weapon or not, it can't be helped.
Well, it is supposed to be impossible anyway.

I finish the talks with Luke and return home.
After returning from the guild, I check some accessories out in the armor shop.
Earring seems to be the highest tier accessory available in the armor shop.
The most number of empty skill slots is three.

Earring, huh?
Would it be alright for me to put it on?

It's not like the men who wear earring are weak or anything.
However, if I were to wear earring back in Japan, I would be absolutely laughed at.
I'd rather prefer to be ignored than be laughed at.

"I-Is there any problem if I wear earring?"
"There's no problem, of course."
"A-As expected, it's a good accessory. Is its defensive capability high?"
"Accessories basically provide defense against magic. The better the accessory, the higher the defense, obviously."

I ask Sherry curiously.
Does it increase magic defense?
It's such a trap that earring doesn't increase physical defense.
Although I had already guessed that it was related to magic in some way or another, I was of the idea that it was something worthless but it doesn't seem to be the case.

It has a neat effect. Earring seems to be good.
Or is it good because it's not a piercing type?

Because it's an accessory in this world, no one will associate it to ladies' jewellery.
Roxanne, however, is choosing earring and ring with sparkling eyes.
But Roxanne is always like that when choosing, isn't she?
Isn't she?

“This one’s shine is nice.”
“Beautiful, desu.”
“I think it looks pretty.”

The criteria of selection of these three is funny.
However, fortunately, there are three empty skill slots on this one.
This one would do.

“How about this?”
“Un, this one?”
“Here.”
“It doesn’t look bad.”

After Roxanne’s approval, I pick another one with three empty skill slots.
It’s for the sake of 30% discount.
To be honest, though, I don’t get how this one is different from the rest.

Chapter 143 - Fatty Tuna

In the evening, I experiment with the skill of Jobless.
This time, I try Critical Outbreak.
I wonder if it can stack with Critical Outbreak skill of Gambler.
Will the rate be doubled?

How will Increase in Critical Rate bonus skill act?
Will it apply on just one skill or both?
There are so many questions.

Even though I can use magic continuously, it consumes MP just as quickly.
If critical proc's, more damage can be inflicted for the same consumption of MP.
It hasn't been confirmed, though. There's a possibility that consumption of MP increases if critical proc's.
However, even a normal physical attack, which doesn't consume MP, can turn out critical; so I believe that the consumption of MP remains same even if critical proc's.

If that's the case, it will be more efficient using Critical Outbreak as the skill of Jobless to increase damage than using Basic Magic as the skill of Jobless to increase spells.
Such a possibility exists in theory.
Therefore, I'm going to try various things.
I invoke Skill Settings and choose Critical Outbreak skill of Gambler as the skill of Jobless.

"This is the last experiment for the day. I won't be able to use spells continuously, so the duration of battle will be longer."
"No problem."
"Can you guide us to a place with a lot of monsters, please?"
"Understood. This way."

We advance under the guidance of Roxanne.
As expected, it's reassuring to have Roxanne.

I cast Sandstorm at a group of Ma Breams which we came across.
Because I can cast only one earth spell at a time, it's taking more time to finish off the monsters.

Before long, I conclude that this experiment is a failure.
A failure.
I should have realized it before undertaking it.

Whether critical proc'd or not, I can ascertain only on the basis of the number of spells cast.
What does that signify?

Even if the rate of critical hits is double now, the number of spells cast will reduce only by one or two.
Even if a monster, that dies in eight spells, died in seven spells, it would fall into the scope of trial error and would hence be ignored.
After recording results of about a hundred runs would a significant difference be evident.
Nah, I don't have time for that.

"Ah. Alright then, let's move to Quratar's labyrinth."
"Did you find out something?"

An experiment is something which results in failure most of the times.
And the person who can learn from a failed experiment is called a true, great scientist, Sherry-kun.

What I found from this experiment is that even if the rate of critical hits is double, consumption of MP doesn't decrease much.
Even though I had two Critical Outbreak skills on, the number of spells cast was reduced at most by one or two.
Which proves that it's better to obediently choose Basic Magic as the skill of Jobless.
Because it has been proven, can't it be said that the experiment was a success?

It was a success.
A success.
Actually, it may even be called a great success.

"Whole fish, desu."

Miria brings a whole fish.
One of the Ma Breams seems to have dropped a whole fish.
This alone would warrant it to be called a success.

Thereafter, on Quratar's 11th floor, I observe for a longer period of time whether Critical Outbreak stacks or not.
Normally, I can't take out monsters on 11th floor in one strike of Durandal.
However, if critical proc's, I can.

Once you figure it out, it's easy.
It can thus be ascertained whether critical proc'd or not.
I should have undertaken the experiment on 11th floor from the outset.

The number of monsters that died in one strike were half the total, huh?
The number is too high to deny that Critical Outbreak skills of Gambler and Jobless stack.
It may also mean that Increase in Critical Rate applies on both the skills.

The skill of Jobless has quite a potential.
It can be big, depending on how I use it.
Only regret is that there's just one empty skill slot.

With the experiment over, we return home.
There's a note from Luke left at the entrance.
I would like to hold the talks today.

"Master, there's a message from Mr. Luke. He asks of you to visit him at once."
"Oh well, I would have anyway."

Even though he didn't mention, I know what it's about.
But there shouldn't be any urgent need. I can visit tomorrow morning, too.

If I wait till tomorrow morning, we can reach the boss room of Haruba's 22nd floor.
We are adequately strong, aren't we?
Although I bought earring, I'm not using it. There's no Kobold Monster Card either.

However, there won't be any problem with the level of our current battle strength.
Also, I haven't parted with the Rod of Offerings yet.

"Do, desu."

One certain individual is motivated already.
Instead of Cook, I switch Jobless to Warrior.
If I don't get fatty tuna after a number of tries, I'll think about selecting Cook.
If worse comes to worst, I have another ace up my sleeves. Choosing Cook's skill as the skill of Jobless and stack it with Cook's skill, that is.

"Please."

From the waiting room, we proceed to the boss room.
After casting Abnormal Status Resistance Down on Black Diamond Tuna, I take on Ma Bream.
Vesta confronts the Ma Bream from the front while I sneak attack it from the back using Durandal.

It isn't cowardly.
It's a strategy.
Because the attacks of the monster are directed to Vesta, I'm having it easy.
As long as I'm careful of the swing of its tail, I'll be safe.

When I hammer a Rush into the Ma Bream, I hear a sound.

"Did it, desu."

When I was trying to figure out what it was, the Black Diamond Tuna falls onto the ground, petrified.
It seems to have turned into stone before I could finish off the Ma Bream.
I really wonder if the chance of petrifaction depends on the motivation of the user.
Nah, it must be a coincidence.

"Go there."

Roxanne and company join us and encircle the Ma Bream.
There is no chance for Ma Bream to win now that all the members of the party have surrounded it.
We take it out easily.

After switching Warrior to Cook, I head to the petrified Black Diamond Tuna.
The Ma Bream dropped a white fish.
I wonder what the Black Diamond Tuna will drop.

I stab Durandal from right above the Black Diamond Tuna.
When it gets petrified, the tuna becomes easier.
It's not easy when it's moving.
It's an unpleasant opponent.

I keep on thrusting into the tuna like a piston.
Up and down. Repeatedly. Intensely.
Intensely. Violently.
My passion keeps surging up.

How about that, huh?
How about that?

The tuna is just lying there like a dead fish.
It's not answering.
The piston is doing all the talking.

I can also use magic but currently, I'm using Cook's skill as the skill of Jobless.
I should be able to take it out with Durandal.
Ah. Since there's no fear of getting attacked at the moment, Should I remove Monk?

Oh well, whatever.
I can finish it off with Durandal alone.
It will take a few more stabs at best.

The Black Diamond Tuna turns into smoke. Durandal hits the ground.
It's dead?
When the smoke dissipates, there was an item remaining.

“Fatty tuna, desu.”

Miria exclaims and jumps at it.
Her movement was faster than any monster’s I have ever seen.
I wonder if Miria’s motivation has something to do with the chance of it dropping fatty tuna.
Not really. It’s due to my selecting Cook.

Miria brings both the white fish and the fatty tuna.
One person alone can’t carry both.
It did drop fatty tuna, huh?

Come to think of it, who taught Miria the Brahim word ‘fatty tuna’?
She learnt it before I even knew it.
Like I thought, she learns fish related words quickly.

“We will have fatty tuna for tomorrow’s dinner. Miria will be cooking it. Actually, we will have two.”
“Yes, desu.”

I was prepared to do several rounds anyway. Because we got it at first attempt, however, all my preparation will go to waste.
So we will keep doing it until we get one more fatty tuna.
I would also like to try fighting the boss with magic.

“Which monster appears on Haruba’s 23rd floor?”

I ask Sherry after we were out of the boss room.
Even though I intend to fight Black Diamond Tuna again, it’s better to advance to 23rd floor for now.

“Scissors Lizard. It uses fire magic and is also resistant to fire magic. It’s weakness is earth magic. It drops leather, albeit rarely.”
“Leather?”
“It’s a raw material used in making equipment. Monsters on 23rd floor and onward use area of effect magic attacks. Because it can’t be dodged, it’s troublesome. I don’t think we will die in one hit, though.”

Sherry gives us the bad news.
Area of effect magic attack, huh?

Firestorm, which I use, hits with certainty. Now monsters will be able to use it, too.

“Will it be alright?”
“With Master here, there won’t be any problem.”
“It still hasn’t been long since we first entered the labyrinth. I haven’t heard any account of anyone advancing to 23rd floor so quickly. I have heard that Dragon Knight brings stability to the party but again, it hasn’t been long since Vesta joined us.”

Sherry adds to my unease.
Normally, people train for years before stepping into 23rd floor.
It’s still too soon for us which is the cause of my unease.

That said, we have an advantage over other people and that’s Gained Experience 20x.
It has only been half a month since Vesta joined us.
But she has already reached Dragon Knight Lv29.

“Oh well, we won’t know unless we fight. If worse comes to worst, there’s Sacrificial Misanga. If we’re lucky, it’ll sacrifice itself for us.”
“Th-That’s right. There’s Sacrificial Misanga.”

I convince Sherry on the pretext of Sacrificial Misanga.
It’s the equipment Sherry made herself.

My sixth sense says that there will be no danger.
If there was such a big difference between the difficulty levels of 22nd and 23rd floors, I must have heard something in this regard.
Not just Sherry, there must have been some warning from the guild, too.
Or I must have discovered the difference between mortality rates of 22nd and 23rd floors.

The attacks of the monsters on 22nd floor were not fatal.
I don’t believe I will die in one blow on a floor that’s just one level above.
Even though there’s a difference between area of effect magic attack and physical attack.
If it weren’t so, 23rd floor would be full of dead bodies.

I understand this because I often go to the front when I use Durandal in order to recover my MP.
My bad.

“Are you all fine with it?”
“Of course. I will follow Master.”
“Yes, desu.”
“I think it’ll be alright.”

The three of them seem to be fine with it.
I thought that Vesta will be apprehensive about the impending crisis for it has only been half a month since she first entered the labyrinth with us.

However, Vesta has already been attacked by the monsters on 22nd floor.
At that time, she looked as if nothing happened.
It has reached a point where she doesn’t need even one Heal.
Now that she has leveled up, she has become a lot stronger, surely.

“Let’s go then.”
“Yes.”

From 22nd floor, we move to 23rd.
Even though it’s 23rd floor, there’s same small room at the entrance.
There’s same black wall behind us. And there’s same cave ahead of us which separates into three different paths.

“Roxanne, do you know the smell of Scissors Lizard?”
“I haven’t encountered it before but there’s a monster which I haven’t smelled before. That’s probably it.”
“Is it nearby? The fewer the better.”
“Although it’s not close, I can smell a group of monsters which I haven’t smelled before. They seem to be small in number.”

Roxanne is, as expected, useful.
Since they seem to use area of effect magic attacks, the fewer we encounter in the beginning, the better.
Imagine a group of five Scissors Lizards all shooting area of effect magic attacks at the same time.
And all the attacks hit.

Huh?
Now that I think about it, spells can't be cast simultaneously but what about monsters?
Because they don't use incantation but construct magic formation, is it different?
What if they all invoke their skills and Sherry's Incantation Interruption skill doesn't make it in time?

Bad monster is bad, indeed.
Anyways, the point is, we should avoid fighting five monsters right away.
Stress reduces lifespan.

"Well then, let's return to 22nd floor and retry the boss battle."
"Yes, desu."

We return to 22nd floor and take out the Black Diamond Tuna again.
Petrifaction didn't proc this time, neither did it drop fatty tuna.
Nor I had cook on, so it can't be helped.

"Roxanne, is there a small group of Scissors Lizards nearby?"

After finishing off the boss and returning to 23rd floor, I ask Roxanne.

"No, it's same as before. No one seems to have passed through here. There's no small group nearby."

Ah
If no party passes through and disturbs an area, the position of the monsters in that area remains the same?
So if someone kills them, a different combination spawns?

There are less people in Haruba's labyrinth to begin with and even less on 23rd floor.
When time passes, the monsters move about but not much time has passed since we were last here.
Should I pass some more time and see what happens?

Chapter 144 - Scissors Lizard

I decide to continue fighting the boss of 22nd floor.
Using Dungeon Walk, I move to a small room close to the boss room and then walk to the room.

“I plan on fighting the next boss battle using magic. I want to test if the magic will work in the boss battles or not.”
“Understood. I don’t believe you will have any trouble since it’s you, Master.”
“Even if the boss is strong, we defeated Ma Breams in quick battles, so I don’t think we will have any problem. Black Diamond Tuna is similar to Ma Bream as it’s resistant to water and weak against earth magic.”

It should be fine since sherry said there is no problem, shouldn’t it?
I feel a bit of relief.

“What should we do with the battle formation?”

Roxanne brings up a question.
This time around, there is an issue with the formation, too, huh?
If I am going to defeat the boss using magic, there is also the possibility of waiting instead of attacking first.
It wouldn’t buy us that much time, though.

“We will do it like we usually do. Roxanne, Sherry and Miria will encircle the Black Diamond Tuna; Vesta will take care of the accompanying monster.”
“Understood.”

Also, the boss room is not that large.
So I guess there is no need to change the battle formation unnecessarily.

“I will lend Vesta this sword since this is only a test.”
“Yes, thank you very much.”

I pass Durandal to Vesta in the waiting room.
Although Vesta can't use Rush, her battle prowess shouldn't be any low.
Overall, it will be rather efficient since I will be using magic.

However, if that's the case, won't it take less time?
I have to wait for the change in positions on 23rd floor.
Oh well, if it doesn't work, I'll just do more rounds.

The door to the boss room opens immediately and we go inside.
I'm no longer sure if having scarce number of people is a good thing or bad.

The smoke gathers and monsters appear.
This time, it's a Rtoll Troll accompanying the Black Diamond Tuna.
It is disadvantageous to fight monsters using magic when they have different elemental weakness but there is nothing I can do about it.

I cast Sandstorms continuously while standing close to the door.
Because the boss is stronger, I have to use the magic of same element as the boss' weakness.
After shooting two Sandstorms, I cast Abnormal Status Resistance Down on the Black Diamond Tuna.
Roxanne, Sherry and Miria surround the boss.

Vesta charge the Rtoll Troll with Durandal.
The Rtoll Troll raises its arms up.
Vesta calmly takes her stance.
She evades the punch and attacks the monster's arm from the side using both her swords.

Her two sword didn't hit the same spot but slashed top and bottom.
Brutal.
It must have been more painful since it was not at the same spot.

I am not sure about monsters.
But its arm would be disabled if it were human.
Actually, if it's Durandal, it will cut the bone of a human into two.

As for the Black Diamond Tuna, Roxanne is attacking from the front while Miria is running around and attacking it from behind.
Sherry is thrusting her spear from the side.
I cast earth spells continuously.

A magic formation appears under the Black Diamond Tuna for an instant.
Sherry, however, cancels it immediately.

This battle formation doesn't appear to have any flaw.
The boss battle is going smooth. Using the spacious room, we have separated both the monsters.
It is difficult for me to concentrate on two monsters at the same time.
Because we have separated both the boss and the accompanying monster, Sherry can't keep an eye on both of them.

Earlier, I used to suppress the accompanying monster myself using Durandal.
This time, it's Vesta who is using Durandal.
Although the boss possesses more powerful magic and skill, it is not a good idea to let the other monster run lose.
We have two weapons with Incantation Interruption skill.

If I can fight using magic, won't I be able to send Durandal back when fighting?
It doesn't make any difference for me to fight using Durandal and [Rush].
But it is safer for me to fight from the distance using magic.

The Rtoll Troll collapses.
The finishing blow was delivered by Vesta with Durandal instead of my magic.
After handing Vesta Durandal, it's even more impossible for me to deliver the finishing blow.

I slip next to Sherry and cast Sandball at the Black Diamond Tuna from the back.
Vesta moves to the opposite side and attacks it with both her swords.
After everyone circles it, we defeat the boss.
Vesta delivers the finishing blow with Durandal again.

The tuna falls onto the ground and turns into smoke.
Leaving lean tuna behind.
We decide to retry it. There's no helping it.
Even if I defeat it with my magic, I didn't have Cook on.

"Lean tuna, desu."

Miria brings over the lean tuna only.
She doesn't seem interested in the item dropped by the Rtoll Troll.

"Although It took quite some time, it's not like I can't fight using magic. Nevertheless, I will fight like I used to onward from next battle. We will continue with the boss battle until it drops fatty tuna."

At any rate, if I have to bring out Durandal when fighting, there is a little meaning in using magic when fighting.
From now on, it will be better to fight as usual.

"Okay, desu."

I receive the tuna meat and put it inside my Item Box.

"I believe it was good to check whether you can fight using magic or not, especially, since it will be two accompanying monsters to come out in the boss battles onward from 23rd floor."
"Really?"
"Yes."

Sherry advises.
Onward from 23rd floor, since the number of monsters in the boss battles will increase, it will be better to use area of effect magic, huh?
It will difficult in various ways.

A labyrinth is a living being, after all. I doubt it would want to be done for so easily.
On the other hand, although it feeds on people, no one would go inside if it became strong right from the first floor.
The first floor is easy.
However, moving up the floors, it reinforces its defense.

It's actually good in a way.
Thanks to it, people are gradually getting stronger, too.

"If there will be three monsters in the boss battles, it may be better to fight using magic."
"I guess so."
"However, we need to come up with a battle formation."

The only two weapons we have with Incantation Interruption are Durandal and Sherry's spear.
We can't deal with them one to one if there are three monsters.

"If I use spear, I cover some distance, so I think I can deal with two monsters by myself."
"Really? I will be depending on you then."

Sherry can do it, apparently.
She's extremely reliable.
Sherry is also quite useful in battles.
Doesn't that make me look even more useless?

"That way, we should be able to find a group of Ma Breams. There is a strong smell of Ma Breams coming from there, so there should be quite a number of them."

Upon reaching 23rd floor, Roxanne confirms the smell.
There seems to be change in the positions.

"Good, as expected of Roxanne. Let's head that way then?"

We advance under Roxanne's guidance.
If we are going to fight anyway, it's better to fight sooner.

On the way, I switch Gambler to Alchemist.
I cast Plating on all party members.
Just in case something happens.

"Next time, when we meet the monsters, it will be better to approach them rather than waiting for them like we used to."
"N? Ah, I see."
"Because we have this."

Sherry suggests while showing off her Steel Spear of Authority.
Even if the enemy tries to shoot area of effect magic attack, it will be possible to cancel the attack if they are within the range of the spear.
Is that why it is better for us to close them down instead?
This weapon is more useful than I thought.

“Got it. However, I am planning to receive the first one, so try not to cancel it quickly, please.”
“Understood.”

We can’t afford to cower forever. We should try to receive one area of effect magic attack, at least.
I issue instructions to Sherry in this respect.
I think it will be fine to wait instead of rushing over to attack but they may shoot a second attack while we are waiting.
I guess it is better to approach them after all.

Monsters appear.
Two Ma Breams and one Scissors Lizard.
As expected of Roxanne.
It is the combination I wanted.

The four of them start running.
I fire a barrage of Sandstorms.
Ma Bream and Scissors Lizard have the same elemental weakness, that is earth, so there is no need to change the skill of Jobless.

Scissors Lizard is a lizard with scissors.
It has scissors hands just like crayfish.
Its body, however, is that of a lizard’s.
Its face is like a reptile’s. It has a tail, too.

Maybe it’s because of the tail that it somewhat looks like a crayfish.
FOFFOFFOFFO, I burst into laughter inwardly.
It is a crayfish serving.

With the sand dancing, I close in.
I was planning on casting another spell once it faded but it didn’t go well for I was on the move.
In order to interrupt incantation, it’s needed to keep a certain degree of focus.

Just like it is difficult to cast spells while swinging a sword around. It’s the same.
I stop and cast the next magic spell.
Roxanne and company confront the monsters quickly.

“That one, Miria.”
“Okay.”

Miria seems to be attacking the Scissors Lizard.
I thought Roxanne sent her there because it was the enemy closest to her but she seems to be betting on petrifaction.

Sherry positions herself diagonally behind Miria.
She doesn’t seem to be attacking.
Because I told her that we need to receive the first shot.
Because there is a chance of cancelling the lizard’s magic attack if she thrusts her spear while it’s constructing magic formation.

The Scissors Lizard swings its scissors down.
Miria blocks it with her shield.
After blocking, she thrusts her estoc of petrifaction.
Petrifaction didn’t proc.

“It’s coming.”

Before I arrive at the front, Roxanne warns.
Magic formation appears under the Ma Bream.
It’s gonna be Ma Bream, huh?

Sherry hits it and cancels the attack with her spear.
It was correct decision to close in from the outset.
We wouldn’t have arrived in time had we waited.
Roxanne would easily dodge it, however, if it was a mere water shot.

I catch up with the vanguards and stand behind Vesta.
It is dangerous to stand behind Roxanne.
I cast an earth spell.

The two Ma Breams collapse.
Both Ma Bream and Scissors Lizard are weak against earth magic.
Since they didn’t fall at the same time, it means that the Scissors Lizard is stronger.
I switch to Sandball and blast the lizard.

After throwing quite a number of Sandballs, the lizard falls.
The monsters onward from 23rd floor seem to be a lot stronger.
However, the Scissors Lizard didn't use magic until it fell down.

Could it not use it?
Was that really so?
Well, if it were to shoot a barrage of attacks every battle, the difficulty of 23rd floor would be terribly high.
All that remains is to ascertain as to how frequently it uses area of effect magic attack.

"The difficulty of the battles on 23rd floor is a lot higher, to the point that we need to approach them fast. Also, the duration of the battles will be longer. Will you all be alright?"
"Its movement itself wasn't special at all, so I think it will be alright."

I knew it would be so for Roxanne.
Miria also confronted the Scissors Lizard from the front and she didn't allow it to get closer.

"The problem is the area of effect magic attack."
"True."

Sherry understands the main problem.

"Petrifaction, desu."
"I will be relying on you then."
"Okay, desu."

Petrification didn't proc this time but the more prolonged the battle, the higher the chance of Miria successfully inflicting petrifaction.

"I think it will be alright."

Vesta is reliable.

"Roxanne, is there any easy group of Scissors Lizard around? If not, we will go back to 22nd floor."
"This way, I think."

We advance following Roxanne.
I cast Plating on us all.
I want to fight until I am hit with an area of effect magic attack.
If I go back to the boss battle, I will have to remove Alchemist and add Cook or Warrior, which will remove the effect of Plating.

The next group comprises two Scissors Lizards.
Roxanne and Vesta rush, taking positions in the front.
Miria runs around, doing sort of hit-and-run.

When did Vesta get promoted to the main tank?
Well, she has the required physique, after all.
It gives a reliable feeling, watching her from the back.

Vesta repels the Scissors Lizard with her two two-handed swords.
The lizard's stance breaks after getting repelled.
Without missing this chance, she hammers it with her swords.
Miria thrusts her estoc of petrifaction into it from the side.

Like always, Roxanne is dodging the lizard's attacks by a hair's breadth.
The attacks appear to be hitting her when I look from the back.
But none of the attacks have landed.
From the back, Sherry is keeping an eye while holding her spear.

The way it is, our party looks solidly stable.
In the end, we finished them off before they could shoot area of effect magic attack.

I wonder if Scissors Lizard Lv23 can't use magic frequently.
Even though I just want to get hit once.

Next was a group of Scissors Lizard and Ma Bream, one each. Miria's attack succeeded against the Scissors Lizard and petrifaction proc'd.
After that, we came across a lone Scissors Lizard. Everyone surrounded it because it was alone, and defeated it before it managed to shoot area of effect magic attack.
Moving further on, we encountered a group of Scissors Lizard, Ma Bream and Hat Bat, one each. The Scissors Lizard ended up petrified.
It's useless, isn't it?

Chapter 145 - Searching for Fatty Tuna

“Still no area of effect magic. I guess it can’t be helped, can you guide us to a place with lots of scissor lizards?”
“That seems to be the case, I’ll do that then.”

I changed Roxanne’s instructions.
My MP will run out early at the rate things are going.
I take out Durandal and finish off a Scissor Lizard that had been petrified.

We continue forward under Roxanne’s guidance.
She led us to a place with four Scissor Lizards.
Gah.
Suddenly the difficulty has gone up quite a bit.

Four people started running.
I use [Sand Storm] from my position.
After using two spells, I run after them.
The Scissor Lizards are coming this way as well.

The demons confront the vanguard formation.
Four lizards cram into a line.
There doesn’t seem to be a guy staying at the back.
If someone stayed at the back, they’d use magic, and that’s scary as well.

Scissor Lizards gathered, and swung their scissors.
Roxanne avoided it, Miria fended it off with her shield, and Vesta blocked with a sword.
Roxanne in particular is skillfully dodging the attacks of two Scissor Lizards.
I feel sorry for the Scissor Lizards whose attacks have become so useless.

Sherry is attacking one of the four with her spear.
She is ready in case they try to use multiple magic in quick succession.
I used another double [Sand Storm].
We are steadily defeating the Scissor Lizards.

“It’s coming.”
“I did it, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria shouted at the same time.
A red magic formation is at the feet of one of the Scissor Lizards.
Another Scissor Lizard has become petrified.
Is this finally the debut of the magic?

The magic formation disappears, and the lizard spits out a ball of fire.
Isn’t this single target attack magic?
The Scissor Lizards magic doesn’t seem to be area effect magic.

Roxanne could easily avoid it… but instead is hit by it.
Why?

“It doesn’t feel like anything we need to worry about.”

She seems to have taken the hit on purpose.
The exchange of attacks with the Scissor Lizards continues on.
While I continuously use magic, the petrified Scissor Lizard becomes smoke.
A little later, the other Scissor Lizards collapse as well.

“Are you alright?”
“There’s no problem. This isn’t enough damage to require healing either.”

I ask Roxanne while I heal her.
Are you alright?

For a Wizard, I do not believe there is a difference in strength between the single target magic and the area of effect magic.
Is it the same with demons?
Roxanne let herself be hit by the magic on purpose, but how should I estimate it?

Since they are demons, there is the possibility they have multiple types of magic.
Though the demon just now didn’t do anything else.
Scissor Lizards should have at least two types of magic, single target and area of effect.

“Here, desu.”

Miria brought leather.
It’s the first time leather was dropped.
We defeated this many, and there’s just one?
Since it isn’t a rare cooking ingredient, it’s drop rate won’t even increase if I use Cook.

“Leather, lea-th-er.”
“Leather, desu.”

It’s not the skin of a fish, so she’ll have forgotten by tomorrow.

“Can you make equipment with this?”
“Yes, though it normally takes many years for a Master Smith to get to that stage.”
“You won’t have a problem Sherry. You can do it.”
“Right.”

I reassured Sherry.
I’m more worried about the Scissor Lizards magic.
I’d like the opinion of Sherry’s common sense.

“The problem is the Scissor Lizards magic. Do you think it’s safe?”
“I think you don’t need to worry about a single blow. Even in the worst case we can endure a number of them, but they don’t seem to use them often. It looks like we’ll be able to fight fine.”

Sherry seems to trust Roxanne’s evaluation.
Are you alright Sherry?

Area effect magic will hit all of us.
With that in mind, it would be a cheat if the strength of it became too high.
We can probably believe that it’s power isn’t any different from the single target attack magic.

The Scissor Lizards still haven’t used the area effect magic.
We can’t wait for it forever.
It looks like we are fine on the 23rd floor at least.

“Shall we head back to the 22nd floor now?”
“Yes, desu.”

It’s no use just waiting around for the area effect magic.
We move to the small room nearby the floor 22 boss room using [Dungeon Walk], and then head to the boss room.
Along the way I switch out Alchemist for Gambler.
For the Black Diamond Tuna, it will be good if I can use [Abnormal resistance decrease] and have the boss petrified again, and then switch to Cook.

I use Durandal against the boss, and recover MP.
Sherry makes the decisive blow against the Black Diamond Tuna, and Vesta did the Ma Bream.
Fatty Tuna did not drop.
Next time?

“It’s hard to reach the demons with the spear like this. Roxanne and Vesta, can you draw the demons a bit closer together?”
“I understand. I’ll do it.”
“Yes. I think I can.”

Sherry seems to be practicing for using [Incantation Interruption] on multiple demons.
It wouldn’t be good for her to be running around.

Vesta will use Durandal on the boss fight on the 23rd floor.
Sherry will be in charge of backing up Miria and Roxanne.
It might be better to practice with Miria and Roxanne.

But, Miria has the important role of petrifying the Black Diamond Tuna.
She isn’t an Assassin yet so we could pass the Estoc of Petrification to Roxanne, but it’s best to just leave it as her job.
I don’t need to switch it.

In the following boss battle, we didn’t charge straight at the demons, but instead waited for them to move a bit closer.
Roxanne stood in front of the Black Diamond Tuna, and Vesta waited for the Rtoll Troll.
Sherry stood behind the two people.
Miria and I joined in after the demons had approached.

I defeated the Rtoll Troll with Durandal this time.
The strategy is a little better.

“I did it, desu.”

Miria’s petrification worked.
The Black Diamond Tuna is a dead fish.
Even though I used Cook while defeating it, only lean tuna is dropped.
Another round?

“I think we’ve got the positions alright. You can fight as normal now Roxanne.”
“Okay.”
“On the 23rd floor boss you’ll be backing up Roxanne and Miria, Sherry.”
“We only had to wait a moment, so there should be no problem letting Roxanne handle positioning.”

With the planning, I don’t think there will be any problems for the time being.
Now we just need the fatty tuna.

“I’ve gotten a rough idea of it, so it should be alright. Miria, do you understand too?”
“Yes, desu.”
“Ok, on to the next round then.”

We try the boss again for the fatty tuna.
That round, there was no petrification and Sherry got the finishing blow.
The demon fell to the floor.

“Yes, desu!”

Oh?
Was it petrified?
I thought that, but the tuna turned to smoke.
Miria ran over to the wall.

“What happened?”
“A magic crystal, desu.”

A magic crystal seems to have been made.
You left the lean tuna to get the magic crystal?

Fish savings seem to be more important than lean tuna.
We probably wouldn't find the magic crystals without Miria.
Even if Miria doesn't pick up the lean tuna, someone will get it.

Since it was just lean tuna, we decide to go again.
Miria handed the magic crystal to me with a smile, so I praised her with a "You did well".
When we find magic crystal, we can decide on having fish for the next days dinner.
Well, tomorrows dinner is already fatty tuna.

So we repeat the fight again, trying to get fatty tuna.
I'll set Cook's [Increased drop rate for rare ingredients] as Jobless's skill if it doesn't drop soon.
Since [Critical outbreak] skills seemed to work together, there is a good chance that Cook's [Increased drop rate for rare ingredients] skill will work together as well.
There's the problem that I can't quickly change it again, but we'll have a break to eat breakfast after this anyway.

After another two tries, Miria's petrification worked, and fatty tuna dropped.
When I stabbed the tuna to death, it became smoke and left fatty tuna behind.
Probably because I'm using Cook's [Increased drop rate for rare ingredients].
It's quite useful.

"Good. This will be tomorrows dinner."
"Yes, desu."

Finally the repeated boss battles are over.
Miria passes the fatty tuna to me reluctantly.
I receive it, and place it in the [Item box].

"How is the time?"
"The sun should already be up."

“We’ll stop here then.”
“Okay.”

I check the time with Roxanne, and finish the exploration.
I don’t know if changing Jobless’s skill would have helped or not.
Oh well.

Even if I test it, it will be hard to tell for certain if the two effects overlap.
The single effect isn’t that big to start with.
It’s not worth doing an experiment to check either.

I use [Warp] from the labyrinth, to the wall of the adventurers guild.
We buy ingredients for breakfast, and then return home.

“There is only one leather, can we make something with that much?”

At the end of the meal, I ask Sherry.

“Ah, yes. The leather mitten equipment can be made with it. It uses one leather, and one hide.”
“It uses two kinds of materials?”
“That’s right.”

Do they overlap to reinforce the leather?
The outside might be hide, and the inside might be leather.
Or maybe since it’s for the hand, the part in the palm might be hide.

“We have hide too, so make it when your finished eating.”
“Ah… yes.”
“We’ll get plenty of leather as we fully explore the 23rd floor. We’ll make another piece of equipment tonight.”
“Um, ah, okay.”

Sherry is worried about it, but she doesn’t need to.
Master Smith has risen to Lv34.
Sherry worried whenever I asked her to make new equipment up to now.
She hasn’t noticed there’s no problem yet?

“We haven’t had any problems so far.”
“Making leather equipment is a graduation for a Master Smith from

apprentice. Only dwarves who have had ten years experience can do it."
"It should be fine for Sherry. If it isn't, we can try it again another time."
"Yes."

Sherry agrees.
Even if I say another time, it won't take long to reach Master Smith Lv35.
We don't need to wait a year to try again.

This time feels serious.
I hope you succeed.

Sherry seemed to succeed making the leather mittens easily.
When she finished, leather mittens were left in her hand.
Like I thought, there doesn't seem to be any problem.

"As expected of Sherry, you don't need to worry so much."
"Oh, I can do it."

Sherry passes me the leather mittens.
I let myself relax.

"Amazing, Sherry."
"As expected, desu."
"That's incredible."

I didn't start cleaning up, and listened to Sherry being praised by the other three.

"I'm heading to the merchants guild, please finish up here."
"Yes. Have a safe trip."

From her appearance, Sherry doesn't seem to have overused her MP.
I leave Roxanne to organize the rest, and [Warp] to the merchants guild.

Luke and the other broker met me in the waiting room straight away.
The other broker is the same weapons dealer from recently.
The talks seem to have gone smoothly.

"I have the Rod of Offerings."

I start speaking in the conference room straight away, since greetings are annoying.

“Here, this is it.”
“Let me have a look.”

I pull the Rod of Offerings from my [Item box], and the weapons dealer analyzes it straight away.

“How is it?”
“There’s no doubt, this is it.”

Luke asks, and is answered.
There can’t be any mistakes.

“The Rod of Offerings is alright?”
“It’s good.”

The weapons dealer is interested.
The Rod of Offerings is a follow up trade to the Soul Sucking Staff.
It would be bad if I seemed too reliable, but with Sherry we could do work to a certain extent.
It will be difficult to strike a balance.

“You need at least this much to enter the labyrinth.”
“Yes, you seem quite young, are you from a good family?”
“Well, I’m from a long way away. I’d prefer to talk about the trade.”

The gossip chat stops a bit abruptly.
I’m not much for idle chatter.
If I say something accidentally I might be troubled later.
If I say that I’m from far away, there might be less problems.

I told Roxanne and Cassia that I’m from far away, so there’s no contradiction.
It would be dangerous if I said I was from somewhere local like Vale.

This isn’t the kind of society where a youth leaves their area to head to the city.
You’d need some kind of circumstances to leave your village and move

away.
You don’t need to come to Quratar just because you are an Explorer, there are labyrinths everywhere, and that would just lead to abandoned villages.
I won’t tell them about my circumstances.

Chapter 146 - Loss

“These are Kobold Monster Cards. There are two of them. I have yet to acquire other cards.”
“Is that so?”

The weapons merchant takes out the monster cards as per the deal.
Two Kobold Monster Cards.
He has placed orders for different monster cards but he hasn’t acquired any yet.

There’s a possibility that he’s not telling the truth.
He probably wants to bargain with me using cheaper cards. Oh well, even if he possesses other cards, it’s no use.
There’s no guarantee that the fusion will succeed.

“Instead, I was able to acquire a staff this time. If it’s of use to you, I can give it to you for cheap.”

The weapons merchant brings out a stick.
It’s a staff.
Is he selling it because he no longer needs it?

I’m not too sure that he arranged it this time.
He must have acquired it earlier, before he bought the Sacred Spear.
After all, a short-sighted person can’t be a broker.

“It’s not the best but it’s a staff nonetheless.”
“I guess. I knew you would have many in possession.”
“I acquired it back then, before I got the Sacred Spear.”

The staff, which the weapons merchant brought out, doesn’t have any empty skill slot.
If he fused monster cards with this one, he would fail.
I’ll be better off without it.

“There’s this, too.”

The weapons merchant withdraws the staff and takes out another stick.
It seems to be called Damascus stick.
It’s a stick with a striped pattern.
It comes with one empty skill slot.

“Damascus stick?”
“So you know, huh? It’s a Damascus stick, indeed.”
“I don’t have many stick-type weapons but if you want one, you won’t find many better than this.”

For it’s called Damascus stick, is it made of Damascus steel?
Damascus steel weapon with an empty skill slot is valuable, surely.
Even if you want to buy one, you won’t find it easily in a weapons shop.
Although I don’t need it, I can fuse an appropriate monster card with it.

But I have never seen a Damascus stick at the weapons shop, so it may be risky.
Yet this weapons merchant brought it out just like that?
Is it a counterfeit and the striped pattern is only there to make it look genuine?
Nah, it can’t be a counterfeit for Appraisal is showing it as Damascus stick.

“Thank you very much. Also…”
“Is there something else?”

The weapons merchant puts the Damascus stick on the table.
Next, he takes out one more monster card from his Item Box.
High Kobold?

“To tell you the truth, it’s rare but this time I was able to get my hands on a High Kobold Monster Card. So, how about this? A High Kobold Monster Card in addition to the Damascus stick and two Kobold Monster Cards. Even a Rod of Offerings may not necessarily be equivalent to this offer.”

The weapons merchant offers.
As for the High Kobold Monster Card, I know what it’s called, obviously, but what is it used for?
It’s my first time seeing it.

I have no idea.
What do I do now?
I should have brought Sherry with me.

“High Kobold?”

Looking at Luke, I gesture.
If there’s anyone who can help me here, it’s Luke.

“In exchange for a successfully fused monster card, it’s not a bad deal. As for the High Kobold Monster Card, it’s rarely exhibited at the auction, so it’s difficult to speculate its market price. It’s my first time seeing one, too.”

Although it’s your first time seeing it, you don’t have any hint of surprise.
Doesn’t it feel like they have some sort understanding?
He claims that his offer is higher than the market value of a Rod of Offerings but there’s a possibility that it’s actually lower.

I have no idea as to what skill a High Kobold Monster Card gives.
But he said that it’s rarely exhibited. So, isn’t it better to acquire it?
It won’t be a waste.

“If you think it’s too low, how about additional 3,000 Nars?”

When I was contemplating, the weapons merchant raises his offer.

“I think it’s equivalent to the market price, don’t you think?”

What I mean is, if it were the case, you would include 3,000 Nars in the offer from the outset.
It shows your dishonesty.

“Then how about 5,000 Nars?”

He raises his offer further.
If the offer with additional 3,000 Nars was equivalent to the market price, doesn’t that make the offer with additional 5,000 Nars higher than the market price?
Should I drag it some more?

“I don’t particularly need a Damascus stick.”
“Well, how about 6,000 nars then?”
“Un”
“How much do you want?”
“How much do I want? I want the value of the Rod of Offerings.”

I wonder if I should cancel the deal.
30% Up will probably not work, too.
I mean, which one will work? 30% Up or 30% Discount?
Because I came here with the intention of selling the Rod of Offerings, I only selected 30% Up.

“Very well. Then in addition to three monster cards and Damascus stick, I’ll give you 10,000 nars. Also, I’ll bear the cost in respect of the guild temple usage fee and the weapon appraisal charges. You will surely not have any complaint now, will you?”

This time, he seemed a little angry.
Have I angered him?
I’m still not fully convinced, though.
Should I call the deal off?

“You said that if it’s around the market price there won’t be any problem. I think this offer is adequate.”

Luke interjects.
I’m not greedy or anything. It’s not like I’m troubled for money.
I’ll get my hands on a High Kobold Monster Card and a Damascus stick, so it’s not that bad.
So, is there nothing else that I can do?

“Oh well, it can’t be helped. I think this offer is acceptable. Also, there’s no need for weapon appraisal. I trust that it’s Damascus stick.”

I accept the offer.
And receive the monster cards, the Damascus stick and gold coins.
30% Up doesn’t seem to have worked.
I put everything in the Item Box.

Thereafter, we proceed to the guild temple.
To verify the monster cards.

Because I can use Appraisal, I don't need verification but I can't say that out loud.
Oh well, it's not like I have to pay for it.

"How was the deal?"

While leaving the waiting room, I part with the weapons merchant and ask Luke.

"It was not a bad deal, in my opinion."
"The ending wasn't happy, though."
"He's a merchant, too. He won't agree to a deal if it's not profitable for him, so I don't think he's angry."

Was that anger just an act?
Brokers are terrible.
The weapons merchant gets angry and then Luke cuts in to play it down.
Isn't this a classic yakuza tactic of bargaining?
A technique also used by police to draw voluntary confession.

In other words, yakuza and police are essentially the same.
I can't compete with them.
I wonder if I should have exerted myself more.

Oh well, it must be around the market price; it was probably not a lie.
Nothing can be done about it now.
I'll forgive them this time.

"Since I have acquired a spare card, too, I'll temporarily withdraw from buying Kobold Monster Cards. However, if you find one for cheap, you can bid on it."
"Understood."

I cancel the order for Kobold Monster Card and return home.
I take out a Kobold Monster Card and prepare the earring.

"Sherry, can you perform Monster Card Fusion?"
"Yes, I can."

After all, she didn't seem to have overused her MP when she made leather mittens.
I mean, if she had overused her MP, she would have refused, right?
It's risky.
If needs be, I will have her use recovery medicine.

"Do you know about High Kobold Monster Card?"
"It's the monster card dropped by high-ranked Kobold."

Sherry does seem to know about High Kobold Monster Card.

"Can it be fused together with other monster cards?"
"It seems to be so. If fused together with a High Kobold Monster Card, it's believed that the skill of a card becomes stronger than if fused together with a normal Kobold Monster Card. However, there has been no account of successful fusion."
"No success?"

I question subconsciously.
Is it perhaps a useless card?

"However, just like Kobold, other high-ranked monsters drop high-ranked monster cards, too. There has been a case of successful fusion of a High Kobold Monster Card together with a high-ranked monster card."
"Is that so?"
"Furthermore, there has been no instance of successful fusion of a standalone high-ranked monster card. Therefore, it's believed that a high-ranked monster card must be fused together with a High Kobold Monster Card."

Are there conditions of use?
A high-ranked monster can't drop a useless card, surely.
If you meet the conditions, it can be a powerful monster card.
You're supposed to fuse a High Kobold Monster Card together with another high-ranked monster card, huh?

In other words, if I am to fuse this High Kobold Monster Card, I'll have to first acquire another high-ranked monster card.
So that weapons merchant was actually getting rid of his nuisance.
Why do I feel like I have been had this time?

“Oh well, I’ll get my hands a high-ranked monster card sometime.”
“Umm, there’s a theory that a master smith can’t fuse a high-ranked monster.”

Sherry conveys apologetically.

“So it’s no use?”
“There’s no case of successful fusion by a master smith. However, it’s believed that a high-ranked monster card can be fused by a person with an advanced job of master smith called Sekigan 《One-eyed》.”
“One-eyed?”
“It’s a job which every master smith strives to get. Only a master smith, who has performed smithing for a long period of time, can acquire it.”

One-eyed — sounds cool, doesn’t it?
Dragon Knight sounds cool, too.
Yep, when she uses the skill of Master Smith, her hands do glow.
If I keep on looking every time, my eyesight will eventually get bad.

“Is their eyesight bad?”
“Even though it’s called One-eyed, it doesn’t mean that their eyesight is bad.”

It’s not?
Oh well, it would be a terrible job indeed if it made you lose your eye.
If you restored your previous job, would you get your lost eye back?

“Can you please fuse these Goat and Kobold Monster Cards with this earring then?”
“Yes.”

I pass the earring and the monster cards to Sherry.
I’m not using High Kobold Monster Card this time.
If I did, it would end up failed, most likely.

I’m not sure whether it can be fused with a normal monster card, nor am I sure if Sherry, a master smith, can fuse it.
It’s too big a risk.
Because I no longer have the Rod of Offerings, my first priority is to get 2x Intelligence skill.

Sherry fuses the monster card.
After the light subsides, an Earring of Offerings was remaining.
The 2x Intelligence skill has been attached successfully.

“It’s a success. As expected of Sherry.”
“Thank you very much.”

I receive the Earring of Offerings from Sherry.
I put it on my left ear.
When I use Appraisal, it was not showing.
Do I have to remove Sacrificial Misanga?

Only one accessory, whichever is equipped first, seems to be enabled.
If I put earrings on both my ears, not both of them will be enabled.
I remove Sacrificial Misanga and re-equip the earring.

It’s scary to remove Sacrificial Misanga.
Oh well, I’m a rearguard anyway.
I won’t be in a crisis as long as I’m casting spells from the back.
Thus far, there has been no opportunity for Sacrificial Misanga to activate.

What I’m worried about is when I will have to move to the front in order to use Durandal to recover MP.
When that time comes, I’ll equip Sacrificial Misanga.
It’s bothersome.
Although it’s bothersome, it’s still better than regretting ‘why did I not wear Sacrificial Misanga!?’

Not regretting ‘why did I not wear Sacrificial Misanga?’ but ‘why did I receive an attack when I wasn’t wearing Sacrificial Misanga?’
It’ll be really bad.

Where am I? ‘Go to Murasakino’ ‘Go to Netherworld’ (TN: Murasakino is a railway station in Japan)
Just because it was bothersome, this is where I ended up.

There are two more empty skill slots on the Earring of Offerings.
I better get a Caterpillar Monster Card as soon as possible and have it fused.

Chapter 147 - Sacred Spear

I enter Haruba's 23rd floor.
I plan on testing both the Sacred Spear and the Earring of Offerings.
It's scary to suddenly test it against Scissors Lizards but we have already tried it prior to testing the Sacred Spear.
There won't be any trouble, hopefully.

I manage to defeat the monsters faster than when we tried earlier.
I'm becoming fairly stronger.
The basic Sacred Spear is weaker than the Rod of Offerings but the Earring of Offerings has 2x Intelligence skill attached.
So it's alright.

There's another merit in using the Sacred Spear.
Like Sherry, I can thrust the spear from the second row.
It's possible to attack the monsters from behind Miria or Vesta.
As for Roxanne, it's too dangerous to stand behind her.

With the Sacred Spear, I can attack during the cooldown period of the spells.
For now, I will only be able to poke them but once I get used to it, I may be able to kill them.
Also, it will become much easier once I attach MP Recovery skill.

"The only monsters ahead seem to be Ma Breams."
"Oh, I see. Amazing as always, Roxanne. Because I'm going to test something next, it will take longer to defeat the monsters."

After Roxanne informs, I put the Sacred Spear back and take out the Damascus stick.
After all, it will be better not to test Damascus stick against Scissors Lizards.

The monsters appear.
Two Ma Breams.
I cast two [Sandstorm]s.

I start running once I was done casting but no one else moved.
Why?
Eh? I see.
Because they are just Ma Breams, it isn't necessary for us to close in to them.

Is that the reason why Roxanne informed?
I didn't tell them that I will be using Damascus stick or that I want to test something against Ma Breams.
Was there an instruction not to run when it's just Ma Bream?
I hate running with the Sacred Spear so I put it back in my Item Box. Had I known we would be engaging them like this, I wouldn't have removed it.

Neither Miria nor Vesta started running.
Sherry wouldn't in any case.
When I passed by the two of them, I'm pretty sure they were surprised.
I'm probably the only one who didn't understand.

I cast spells again with a face as if nothing happened.
I'm glad a wizard can cast spells while moving.
I would be embarrassed if I were the only one to start running like a noob.

The Ma Breams have been defeated.
As for the attack power of the Damascus stick, it's higher than a rod's but lower than a staff's, huh?
There's also the effect of 2x Intelligence skill of the accessory, of course.
Although I can't use it as main weapon for it's weaker than the Sacred Spear, it's more than enough as a spare.

I equip the Sacred Spear again and continue with the exploration.
We encounter four Scissors Lizards and one Rtoll Troll.
It's a big family.

This time, the four girls start running immediately.
They understand it fully, huh?
It's confusing.
From the same spot, I cast two [Sandstorm]s and follow them.

I have to cast fire spells if I'm to defeat the Rtoll Troll first but I can't for the Scissors Lizards are resistant to fire.
Even if they weren't resistant, it would still be difficult to decide whether to

give priority to the Rtoll Troll or the Scissors Lizards.
Right now, it doesn't make any sense to reduce the group by one Rtoll Troll.

The Scissors Lizards is stronger compared to the monsters from 22nd floor.
I can't afford to delay finishing off the Scissors Lizards.

Roxanne and company confront the monsters.
The front row, comprising the Rtoll Troll and three Scissors Lizards, attacks.

"It's coming."

A magic formation appears under the Scissors Lizard in the back row.
Sparks start dancing immediately after Roxanne's warning.
It's an area of effect magic attack.
It looks like the monster's area of effect magic attack isn't much different from [Firestorm].

In an instant, my whole body heats up.
My chest tightens and my joints start hurting.
My toes feel like they have been plucked.
My skin burns *chirichiri*; A scream of pain leaks out of my mouth.

The three Scissors Lizards, without missing the chance, start attacking.
Roxanne dodges it by twisting her body; Miria leaps back; Vesta blocks it with her swords.
It's good that they avoided the attacks.
I would have been hit for sure had it been me.

Albeit for a moment, I felt pain.
When the heat cools down, the pain eases up.
It doesn't seem to have spread to the clothes and the rucksack.
Only the body seems to be affected by the heat.

The Rtoll Troll is late as it smacks its big arms down.
Roxanne, however, dodges it like nothing happened.
I exact my revenge and cast [Sandstorm].
Sherry readies her spear and keeps a close eye on the monsters to prevent them from attacking again.

Scissors Lizard's area of effect magic attack doesn't seem to possess enough power to be fatal.
It isn't strong enough to cause death in one or two hits.
I cast [Sandstorm]s in succession and defeat the monsters before they could pull something off again.

"Was that the area of effect magic attack?"

I'm still not confident that I can withstand a second one.
And it would be even more dreadful if it were in quick succession.

"It felt like the area of effect magic attack was stronger. Was it my imagination?"

I had [Plating] cast on Roxanne when she received the single target magic attack before.
It's impossible to accurately measure the power of the attack anyway.
To measure it accurately, you would need to take several attacks and die.
That's the only way.
I don't want to measure it.

"I'm not sure but it isn't like we can't withstand it. Even if it were strong, nothing could be done about it. But there shouldn't be any problem since most of us can withstand it."

Sherry says something reliable.

"Yes, desu."
"Did any of them drop leather?"

Miria brings leather over while I was healing everyone.
She has already forgotten how to say leather in Brahim.

"You are right. If it's this much, there's nothing to be worried about. Ah, I don't need healing anymore."

Vesta declines healing after only once.
She's reliable, too.
Is she sturdy because of she's dragon knight?

“Even if there’s no danger anymore, I would hate it if any damage were left.”
“Okay, I’m fine now. Thank you very much.”

She didn’t decline out of modesty, did she?
As for me, I heal myself once more, even though I feel just fine.

What’s the difference?
Is resolution the difference?
I continue with the exploration after healing was needed no more.

When we receive area of effect magic attack, it’s troublesome to heal everyone right then.
If I didn’t heal them now and they were to receive damage during the next battle, I’m afraid I wouldn’t be able to help them at that time.
I hope I will be able to heal everyone at same time after I acquire Priest.
Or should I have Sherry take up the job of Shrine Maiden?

It would be better to make Sherry a shrine maiden but I would like her to level Master Smith up.
Even more so, when I think of all the new equipment she will be able to make in the future.
Miria would be an assassin and I would like to have Vesta carry on as a dragon knight.

After the process of elimination, only Roxanne remains, huh?
Roxanne seems to be able to take up any job.
I guess it will be better as things are going to be more difficult from now on.

Thereafter, I finished the exploration in the evening, prepared the bath and completed rest of the day’s activities.
After Roxanne, Sherry and the girls tidied up after the dinner, only smithing was left.
It was easy to prepare the bath this time for I set up Basic Water Magic as the skill of Jobless. Today, the temperature seemed high.
I felt refreshed after the bath.

I raked a bit of sweat today.
It wasn’t that hot inside the labyrinth, though.
Will night be sweaty, too?
It was chilly early in the morning, though as I was sticking to Vesta.

Anyways, we finished the day's activities with the bath.
After the bath, I finished the night's activities.
Because of Sex Maniac, I didn't get tired.
Even after the hips workout, I didn't get tired.

The next morning. I grab the map and enter Quratar's 22nd floor.
It isn't necessary to enter 22nd floor early in the morning but I would hate it if it were crowded.

"As for Miria's job, I'm thinking of making her an assassin since she has the Estoc of Petrifaction."

I tell them at the entrance of 22nd floor.
Miria has finally reached Warrior Lv30.
She has acquired both Knight and Assassin, obviously.

I told them because I would feel bad if I changed it quietly.
Even though it's Assassin.
Would she dislike it?

"Okay."
"Sure. I think it'll be great to be able to inflict poison."
"Okay, desu."

Even though the title of the job is Assassin, they didn't dislike it?
I was worried for nothing, it seems.
Being Lv1 is a concern, however.

"Since it's a new job, Miria will need a little time. How about placing Miria in the back?"
"I don't think it's necessary."
"There's no such consideration when a party changes a slave's job in the guild. Such consideration isn't needed."
"Fine, desu."

Roxanne, Sherry, and Miria insist that it's fine.
In a party, the job effects of every party member are shared.
She wouldn't be any weaker even if she became Lv1.

“Err, is there really no problem?”
“Since we don’t know as to how long she will need to stay in the back, and since the monsters on 23rd floor can use area of effect magic attacks, she won’t be safe even in the back.”

What Sherry said seems reasonable.
I have Gained Experience 20x on, and I can see the level, too.
The only floor, where Miria will be safe in the back row, is Quratar’s 22nd floor, probably.

“I understand. Still, be extra careful for a while.”
“Okay, desu.”
“Do you want to give the Estoc of Petrifaction a try, Vesta?”
“Umm, I think I want to.”
“Alright then, when there are fewer monsters, Miria will pass her sword to Vesta and go to the back row. There shouldn’t be any problem in falling back to the second row.”

I propose a compromise plan.
It will be better to switch Miria’s job to Assassin when there are no more than two monsters.
It’s easy for me for I can use Party Job Settings whenever I want.
She won’t be able to notice if I switch her job back to Warrior Lv30 when there are three or more monsters.

“Okay, desu.”
“Thank you very much.”
“Well then, can you please find places with fewer monsters along the route?”

I hand the map to Roxanne and ask of her to guide us.
If there are two monsters, I will leave it to Roxanne and Vesta.
When Miria’s job is Assassin, I will send her to the back row.
I can let her attack from the side if there are no more than two but it’s better for her to stay safe.

Leveling up of Miria’s Assassin job is going smoothly.
I now look forward to Vesta inflicting petrifaction.
Vesta manages to petrify a monster after advancing to some extent through 22nd floor.

“I was able to do it.”
“Did it, desu.”

The Clamshell has been petrified.
I finish it, along with the one Roxanne was keeping company, with a [Sandstorm].

“With this, Vesta has experienced the Estoc of Petrifaction’s power, too.”
“Yes, I think it’s a great weapon.”
“From now on, Miria will be using it. Don’t overdo it, however, since I just changed your job.”
“Okay, desu.”

Her Assassin job has now reached Lv5.
She should be fine fighting on the frontline.

“You can take us to the boss room now. There’s no longer any need to find places with fewer monsters.”

I change my instructions. Roxanne continues to guide us.
We fight on several occasions on the way but Miria’s chance of inflicting petrifaction doesn’t seem to have increased.
That’s fine.
Rather, I should say it’s better.

There’s a skill of Assassin: Abnormal Status Rate Up.
If the chance of petrifaction increased after becoming an assassin, it means the skill was effective.
However, if it didn’t increase, it doesn’t necessarily mean that Abnormal Status Rate Up skill didn’t work.
If the chance of petrifaction doesn’t increase after becoming an assassin, then it means Abnormal Status Rate Up skill depends on the level of Assassin.

Regardless, I plan on having Miria carry on as an assassin.
Her level will go up soon.
If Abnormal Status Rate Up skill depends on the level, the chance of petrifaction will increase eventually.
I look forward to her level increasing.

Miria manages to petrify the Oystershell.
Is it due to Assassin or not?
Its affinity with Gambler's Abnormal Status Resistance Down skill seems to be good.

I don't understand, though, as to how the shell of Oystershell, which is stone to begin with, turned into stone.
I wonder if it just stopped moving.
Without selecting Cook, I clean it up using magic after sending Durandal back.

As expected, the Oystershell didn't leave Oyster behind.
It would be a problem if we obtained just one.

I hand Vesta the Volley which was left behind.
Considering Vesta's need for Volley, she will be receiving a lot of favors on Quratar's 22nd floor.
Also, I can perhaps confirm as to how crowded the boss room is in the evening.

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